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London - 1819

MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

VOL. III.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE

THOMAS HOLCROFT,

Written by Himself,

AND CONTINUED

TO THE TIME OF HIS DEATH,

FROM HIS DIARY,

NOTES, AND OTHER PAPERS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

London:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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THE LIFE

OF

THOMAS HOLCROFT.

CHAP. I.

DIARY. *(Continued.)*

JULY 19*th*. DEBRETT read a philippic by Francis, from his parliamentary debates, against Thurlow, delivered I think in 1784, on the India Bill. It had greater strength and a better style than I supposed Francis capable of. Went for the first time to the fruit-shop next door but one to Debrett's, and eat an ice. A notorious gambler, billiard player, and thief, called the Diamond, after a thousand escapes, has been detected in stealing stockings; is

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taken, and will probably be transported for life. Should I hereafter find time, some of his pranks, as part of the history of the human mind, might be worth recording. Sastres, an Italian, mentioned by Boswell in his Life of Johnson, was at the fruit shop. I asked him if he knew Boswell. The name excited his indignation; he spoke of Boswell as a proud, pompous, and selfish blockhead, who obtruded himself upon every one, and by his impudent anxiety lost what would otherwise have been willingly granted. As an instance, Johnson did not once mention him in his will, after their pretended intimate and sincere friendship; while S—— himself had that honour. This account did but confirm the internal evidence of Boswell's own book. Notwithstanding Johnson's professions, which were but efforts to be kind to him, I think it im-

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possible he should either feel esteem or affection for such a man. I drank one cup of strong tea, and another half water; to this I attribute a second restless night; I went to sleep with difficulty after twelve, awoke before three, as on the 17th, threw up the window, walked in the air, and went to bed. By an effort I had a doze of a few minutes, but was soon perfectly awake, and went into the library, where I sat undressed, pointing and correcting the opera till about five. I then went to bed and slept till nine, but it was not sound and healthful sleep. Johnson complains in one of his letters, Vol. iii. of Boswell's Life, of having had but one sound night's rest during twenty years. Johnson drank tea to excess. To some persons I have no doubt it is a wholesome beverage, to others I suspect it is highly pernicious.

20*th*. Called on Foulkes and Robin-

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son, neither at home. Mr. Armstrong informs me that several persons have been afflicted like myself with hemorrhage, told me that in Ruspini's cases of cures performed by his styptic, was one of a mathematical instrument-maker, of Dean-street, who really had, as Ruspini asserts, a hemorrhage of the nose stopped by the styptic, but who died ten days afterwards in an apoplectic fit. We both conjectured such discharges of blood were frequently beneficial. Read the papers at Debrett's as usual, the same sanguinary measures and modes of revenge mutually practised in Ireland. Played chess and billiards with Geiseveiller: drank no tea, yet had another restless night little better than the last.

21*st*. I daily but slowly proceed with my opera. Saw Banks of K. at Debrett's, and M. the ——'s, member in the last parliament, who very charac-

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teristically told me, (somebody having sent him the translation of Schiller's Don Carlos) that he accepted every thing which was given him. I looked, and he endeavoured to correct himself, by adding, if it did not exceed the value of an octavo volume. A great gossip with little understanding, and I am almost surprised that a look should excite in him a temporary feeling of his habitual selfishness. Played chess and billiards with Geiseveiller. The marker, a garrulous old Irishman; affirmed that Irish wafers were better than English: the reason he gave was, that after a letter was sealed, you might open it, with an Irish wafer, but not with an English. He pretended to talk philosophy, said there was but one colour, and that the way to prove it was to produce total darkness, and then a brown dog would be white. The sun, he said, regulated the tides,

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and it is the moon, and not the sun, that is the cause of light. His own absurd manner of explaining his blunders is highly ludicrous.

22nd.—Wrote the chief part of scene 7, act ii. Called on Sir F. B——— to see a landscape he is painting. It is one of his best, the tone is admirable, the composition and execution spirited. After pointing out what I supposed to be its merits, I added, that the head of the cow in the fore-ground was in my opinion too large. The wide open mouth of a dog barking was overcharged: his clouds likewise, I said, were not sufficiently floating, too much in mass, and not tinted as clouds on such a day always are. We conversed of B——— who had made a favourable report to him of the reception I gave him, and of my pictures.

On the subject of standing in the

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royal presence, Sir F. said that Mr. Kemble seemed to doubt that this was so severely exacted: for when he and Mrs. Siddons were commanded to read a play to the Royal Family, and a splendid circle was assembled to hear them, the Lord Chamberlain came and informed them that they had permission to be seated. But this is a confirmation of the etiquette, and the exception may be accounted for in a variety of ways. He that does not fear to be invidious may begin. Sir F. told me, that in the new edition of Pilkington's Dictionary of Painters, there is a life of Sir Joshua Reynolds, which some attribute to Dr. Wolcott, others, to Opie. Returned, read the life of Johnson. Isaac Read there mentioned as a man superior to all others, in his knowledge of English literature. I have heard Ritson say much the same; if so, it does not

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make him vain at least. His name, as a commentator on Shakspeare, is added to those of Johnson, Steevens, and Malone; yet I remember one day seeing him walk with seemingly great humility at the tail of the two latter; they attentive to each other, or perhaps, each to himself, and Read wholly overlooked. Boswell likewise prates (for I think the term appropriate) of Dr. Towers, who though a whig, is in his class of good writers. Let the works of Towers testify. As a man, when he is in a society where speeches are to be made, he is pragmatical, verbose, and overflowing with a vapid kind of rage. He too was the tail-piece and butt of the late Dr. Kippis, who, when called a man of moderate talents, is not injured.

23*d.*—Read P——'s tragedy. Contains some poetry and passion, presents a picture of the manners of the

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distant age, in which the scene is laid, superior to any thing I remember to have read: but is occasionally verbose. Has not enough of soul, and is deficient in plot. Is much better, however, than many things which pass current; wrote the Mariners' Glee, and the short scene 8, song excepted. Nothing at Debrett's except Irish affairs, and contradiction of the reports which for some days have been floating, of the capture of Buonaparte, &c. Ate little meat at dinner, took half a pint of milk and bread between six and seven o'clock, which served for tea and supper, and slept soundly. Mr. Birch came, and restored the chilled varnish of the pictures, by damping, then gently rubbing them dry with a cloth, and afterward with flannel.

24th.—Sketched scene 9 of opera. Attended picture-sale in the Haymarket: W. the auctioneer, late a bank-

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rupt, paying eighteen-pence in the pound. The best pictures, all or most of them, the property of W———, a picture-dealer, notorious for practising the worst tricks of that tricking trade. He bought his own pictures at high prices, the auctioneer running them up as if he had a room full of bidders, when he had not one: which artifice, I imagine, was for the purpose of asserting to his customers, that each picture fetched such and such a sum, even at an auction. A man ought not to throw away his property, and a picture not fetching its worth, may be honestly bought in; but I do not imagine there was a hope of selling good pictures at this season of the year. No news at Debrett's. Observed the same regimen at dinner and tea, with the same success.

25th. Went with Geiseveiller to see the picture of the siege of Valenci-

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ennes, by Loutherbourg. He went to the scene of action accompanied by Gilleray, a Scotchman, famous among the lovers of caricature; a man of talents, however, and uncommonly apt at sketching a hasty likeness. One of the merits of the picture is the portraits it contains, English and Austrian. The Duke of York is the principal figure as the supposed conqueror; and the Austrian General, who actually directed the siege, is placed in a group, where, far from attracting attention, he is but just seen. The picture has great merit,—the difference of costume, English and Austrian, Hulan, &c. is picturesque. The horse drawing a cart in the fore-ground has that faulty affected energy of the French school, which too often disgraces the works of Loutherbourg. Another picture by the same artist, as a companion to this, is the Victory of Lord Howe on the

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1st of June: both were painted at the expense of Mechel, printseller at Basle, and of V. and R. Green, purposely for prints to be engraved from them. For the pictures they paid 500l. each, besides the expenses of Gilleray's journeys to Valenciennes, Portsmouth, &c. Saw Mr. E—— at Debrett's, who told me he had it from one of the treasury people, that the present King of Prussia, intending to celebrate his accession by a festival at Berlin, caused preparations to be made, and scaffolding to be raised, on which was a throne with an ascent of steps. This was noticed by the citizens, who gave the K. to understand, the steps were too numerous, and the throne too elevated. They afterwards thought further of the matter, and announced their opinion, that such a festival was unnecessary, on which the hint was taken, the preparations were discontinued, and

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the money set apart for that purpose, was distributed among the poor. It was observed by ——, the Quidnunc apothecary, that the Government of Spain exhibited tokens of dissolution, he referring to the loan and voluntary contributions at present petitioned for there. I remarked if this argument were true, there was but an ill augury for Austria, with its forced loan of the bank of Vienna. Lord Thanet came in, and was questioned concerning a prosecution which, it is said, government have instituted against him and others, for an attempt to rescue O'Connor in the Court at Maidstone. He answered he heard this prosecution was begun, but had yet received no official notice of it. The coachman of Judge Buller, he said, was knocked down in Court, and ready to swear he, the Earl, was the assailant, though he sat with the counsel, and was never out

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of the eye of the Judge. The company affirmed Buller's faculties are decayed, (he has had a paralytic stroke.) As a proof, he tells different stories at different times concerning this riot. Another adduced by Thanet is, that, in summing up the evidence, instead of saying the second prisoner, to whom he was referring, he repeatedly said the second witness, till Garrow at length got up in a pet, and called, "You mean the second prisoner, my Lord." M—— and Lady W——, with her boy, were at Debrett's, the only persons when I first went. She talking her usual masculine rhodomontade concerning Fullarton's abuse of the Queen, in his speech on the regency business, which M—— searched for in Debrett's Parliamentary Register, but she could not point out the passage, or at least find the language which she had imputed to him. M——, anxious

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I should know he was so familiar with a lady of rank, three times repeated her title. I kept my eye on the paper I was reading. Was this malice, or a proper treatment of petty vanity? His being once in Parliament gave him an introduction to various persons whose rank he affects to despise, but whose notice he most spaniel-like courts. A part of his gossip is, always carefully to tell what lord informed him of this, and what baronet or lady made such and such a remark. He appears to live with true Scotch economy, except that he is a great feeder and drinker. He hunts for invitations to dinner. Drank tea with Geiseveiller. G——, F——, and Gessner; F—— a man of very confined intellect; being a Bavarian, he is so prejudiced as to imagine Bavaria superior to other countries in or out of Germany. Three other persons called after tea,

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two of them English continental traders: the third, a German from Frankfort, who has executed contracts for government, and is come to England to solicit payment, which, after three years petitioning and dunning, he is still unable to obtain. So G—— tells me, who has it, I suppose, from himself.

26th.—Read Boswell. Worked at the opera. Bought books at King's. Went to Debrett's. The news there, that Buonaparte and his whole fleet were taken: it was communicated by Lord H—— to the horse volunteers that were reviewing in Hyde Park; they immediately gave three huzzas, and it ran from mouth to mouth through the crowd. It was false. Such scenes are tragically ridiculous. An officer of note had arrived from Lord St. Vincent; conjecture immediately knew his business: Lords were the first to believe

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what conjecture affirmed, and men shouted and rejoiced at the imaginary destruction of their fellow beings. Buonaparte has thus been captured at least a dozen times. On one of these occasions Lord L——, as I hear, communicating the news to one of the B——'s, began his letter with three hurrahs.

27*th*.—Concluded corrections and additions to the second act of the opera. Read the papers at Debrett's. The same sanguinary measures still pursued in Ireland. The prevailing party there seem to contemplate the temporary success of Robespierre, but not his catastrophe. Bought more books at King's. Went with Geiseveiller to see a pretended picture by Corregio, and another by Paul Potter. The latter, I believe, is a true picture; the sky and trees excellent; the composition detestable: a view of some public walk in Holland, with cows and strait-lined

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railing, like St. James's Park before the alterations. Of Corregio having perhaps never seen a picture, I cannot pretend to judge; but this sketch, for it is no more, produces too feeble an effect to be his, if we may decide from internal evidence. The owner modestly asks nine hundred guineas for it, or ninety-five paid down, and the same sum annually for nine years on good security. The wild expectations that men form to themselves are pitiably ridiculous.

28*th*.—Reconsidered the two first acts of the opera before proceeding with the third. Nothing at Debrett's. Read the first act of "———" carefully, making pencil marks. Walked to Hampstead; dined with Pinkerton; and after some pleasant literary conversation, relating to the venerable Bede, &c., made my remarks to him on his tragedy. He received them with great

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candour, but was much more desirous that I should correct than that he should. Requested me to take the tragedy back, and go through the four succeeding acts with the same freedom of criticism used in the first. I have promised to perform the task within three weeks. My sleep remarkably sound after my exercise. P—— told me that when he was at Edinburgh during the American war, the Governor of the Castle received despatches. Lady ——, his friend, in the French sense of the word, was with him, and he was half drunk. Unfit for the task himself, he gave her the despatches to read. The lady has a warm imagination, and is delighted by a grand display; something that she read inflamed her fancy, and she exclaimed, "Governor, here is great news; you must order the castle guns to be fired directly." The Governor took her word for

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it, and gave orders accordingly: but the great news, like the capture of Buonaparte in Hyde Park on Thursday, was wholly ideal. The guns were fired, the city was alarmed, crowds came running to know the reason, and the maudlin governor was disgraced and laughed at.

29th.—Monsieur Julien, the assistant of Colnaghi, the print-seller, came with Geiseveiller to see my pictures. He formerly was an auctioneer in Paris; where he sold some famous collections. He praised quite enough; but the French and Italians think that is what politeness requires. Wrote additional verses to songs in the first act of the opera. Clementi and Geiseveiller to dinner. Conversed on health: I maintaining that exercise and moderate feeding were absolutely necessary for people of and after middle age.

30th.—Third act still under conside-

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ration. Nothing at Debrett's, but the respite of Bond in Dublin. The papers state Farmer's library to have sold for ———, and his pictures for 500*l.*— King, the auctioneer, informs me the first sum is accurate, but the pictures brought only 50*l.* I saw them. They were select rubbish: unauthenticated portraits by unknown painters. The sale of Farmer's library astonished every body. His rule was not to exceed three shillings for any book; except once, when he paid three and sixpence for a pamphlet, which brought fifteen guineas in the sale. This anecdote I understood to be on the authority of Dr. Gosset, who is the most constant attendant at book sales of any man in England, booksellers not excepted.— Farmer collected all old pamphlets and black letter books, whenever he could pick them up cheap, and these were resold at enormous prices, not for the

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value of the information they conveyed, but their scarcity. I viewed them as they lay in the auction-room, and books and pictures seemed to be the very refuse of the stalls.

31*st.*—Finished Boswell's Life of Johnson: the author still continuing a pompous egotist, servile, selfish, and cunning; as is evident from the documents and pictures he gives of himself; and defending and condemning, not according to any principles which his own experience and observation had taught, but in conformity to those opinions, whatever they might be, right or wrong, which might most probably ingratiate him with the powerful. As a piece of biography, it is a vile performance; but as a collection of materials, it is a mine. Called on B——. The head of Kemble painted by him for Desenfans is a fine likeness, and a good picture. Saw a pair of his landscapes, but indifferent

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performances. At one time he copied the old masters. One of these copies after Berghem, but in the style of Wouvermans, is a good imitation, penciled with great labour and exactness, but not with the freedom of an original. The subject, a man on a white Galloway, bird-catching; but the copy was not finished, nor the nets inserted.—Wilson, he says, was indolent, and, in his latter time, used to make several attempts at each touch, before his hand reached the precise place. In this manner a picture would remain several days on the easel, with but little apparent progress. If B—— be accurate, the colours on Wilson's palette did not exceed four, and his common menstruum was linseed oil, instead of other oils eight or ten times as dear. He had much comic humour, would turn from his easel to the window, make whimsical remarks on the passengers, pause to

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recollect himself, and begin painting again. He was addicted to liquor, by which his nose became enlarged, and so irritable, that the handkerchief was frequently applied to it, and kept in his bosom for that purpose. Glad of every opportunity to escape from labour to his favourite indulgence, he would say to any acquaintance who happened to call, "Come, let us go and take a drop of something. I have painted enough for one day." Farrington and Hodges were his pupils, and many of the pictures that pass for Wilson's were painted by them, but retouched by himself. Thus the same picture became multiplied. He would even buy copies made from his pictures, work upon them and sell them as his own. To a certain degree they were such, but the practice was dishonest; for an unskilful eye could not detect the inferior parts. Arts like these are the ruin of honest

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and well-earned fame. Wilson, however, was a man of uncommon genius, of which he has left sufficient and undoubted proofs. He and Sir Joshua had conceived some ill-founded prejudices against each other. Under their influence, Sir Joshua once said, at the Academy, Gainsborough was the best English landscape-painter. Wilson, happening to be unperceived at his elbow, replied, "You mean the best English portrait-painter." If it was not Opie, I forget who gave me this anecdote.

AUGUST 1*st*.—Proceed with Middleton's Life of Cicero. It is full of information. Wrote a song to-day, "Dan Cupid, &c." and a glee yesterday, of "Bitter pangs," &c. for the opera. At Debrett's, Mr. Bouverie shewed me the Cambridge paper. Flower, the editor, is a zealot of a bold but honest character. By his paper, he must necessarily

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have made himself extremely obnoxious to persons in power. He unsparingly assails all whose creed or moral conduct he thinks reproachable. Godwin has been several times attacked in his paper, and probably myself. A letter, written from Ireland by a Colonel in the Guards, asserts, that the two O'Connors, Bond, and another, whose name I have forgotten, have consented to inform against the insurgents, and transport themselves from Ireland, on condition that the life of Bond be spared. Lord Thanet said, he had betted fifty guineas to half a crown, that this was a false assertion. I think myself certain he will win. A. O'Connor is a noble-minded man, or I am wretchedly mistaken, and it is said his brother Roger is even his superior. Met Mr. G——, whom I informed that the comedy of "He's Much to Blame" was written by me. He testified great sa-

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tisfaction at the shame its success brought on my persecutors, and that the King, not knowing the author, had commanded it twice. Mentioned its great popularity among the country theatres; invited me to Turnham-Green, and I promised to dine there next Sunday se'nnight.

2nd.—Read Middleton. Wrote a song "The Fiat of Fate," Act 3. Went to Debrett's, read a high-flown complimentary letter, from some city volunteers, to Colonel ———, a bankrupt, persuading him to continue in their command, and describing him as an unfortunate man, but of exemplary worth. A—— remarked that the aristocrats of the corps, had thus stirred in his behalf, because he had gone through thick and thin to serve persons in power. Walked down Constitution-Hill, and wrote Clara's two songs of the third act in the Park.

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Just as I finished, with my pencil in my hand, I saw I was observed by General F——. We know each other personally, but are not acquainted. Acquaintance indeed among persons of rank, I have very few. My feelings will not suffer me to be forward; and such persons are known only to the obtruding, or those who minister to their immediate pleasures and vices. Men of literature lay claim to honors, to which men of rank have but seldom any good pretensions; and both seem jealous of their individual prerogatives.

3rd.—Wrote Duet, Act 3. Worked at the opera. Asked Weld at Debrett's if he knew Boswell. He had met him at coffee-houses, &c. where B—— used to drink hard and sit late. It was his custom during the sessions, to dine daily with the Judges, invited or not. He obtruded himself every where. Lowe (mentioned by him in his life

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of Johnson) once gave me a humourous picture of him. Lowe had requested Johnson to write him a letter, which Johnson did, and Boswell came in, while it was writing. His attention was immediately fixed, Lowe took the letter, retired, and was followed by Boswell. "Nothing," said Lowe, "could surprise me more. Till that moment he had so entirely overlooked me, that I did not imagine he knew there was such a creature in existence; and he now accosted me with the most overstrained and insinuating compliments possible." "How do you do, Mr. Lowe? I hope you are very well, Mr. Lowe. Pardon my freedom, Mr. Lowe, but I think I saw my dear friend, Dr. Johnson, writing a letter for you"—"Yes, Sir"—"I hope you will not think me rude, but if it would not be too great a favor, you would infi-

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nitely oblige me, if you would just let me have a sight of it. Every thing from that hand, you know, is so inestimable."—"Sir, it is on my own private affairs, but"—"I would not pry into a person's affairs, my dear Mr. Lowe; by any means. I am sure you would not accuse me of such a thing, only if it were no particular secret"—"Sir, you are welcome to read the letter."—"I thank you, my dear Mr. Lowe, you are very obliging, I take it exceedingly kind." (having read) "It is nothing, I believe, Mr. Lowe, that you would be ashamed of"—"Certainly not"—"Why then, my dear Sir, if you would do me another favour, you would make the obligation eternal. If you would but step to Peele's coffee-house with me, and just suffer me to take a copy of it, I would do any thing in my power to oblige you."—"I was overcome," said Lowe, "by this sudden

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familiarity and condescension, accompanied with bows and grimaces. I had no power to refuse; we went to the coffee-house, my letter was presently transcribed, and as soon as he had put his document in his pocket, Mr. Boswell walked away, as erect and as proud as he was half an hour before, and I ever afterward was unnoticed. Nay, I am not certain," added he, sarcastically, " whether the Scotchman did not leave me, poor as he knew I was, to pay for my own dish of coffee."

4th.—Continued the opera through scene 9, Act 3. Colonel Barry at Debrett's, returned from Ireland: rejoiced to see each other. Spoke of Ireland as subdued by the divisions which government had found the means to create, and chiefly by the aid of the native yeomanry. Read reviews and magazines.

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5th.—Corrected scene 10. Wrote song for Florid. Called on N——, who had been sent for by the Duchess of D——; she broke her appointment, made another, and broke that, with a note apologising, and desiring he would come again, and bring a copy of his very excellent journal. This a good deal resembles scenes I had with her in 1783, except that I made application to *her* (for recommendatory letters to our ambassador at Paris) which Mr. N—— did not. Pinkerton, Godwin, Stoddart, and J. Parry, to dinner. Stoddart, as usual, acute, but pertinacious and verbose. Godwin clear, and concise.

6th.—Proceeded with the opera. Walked an hour. Returned and finished it. Nothing at Debrett's. Have read Monthly Magazine and Review for some days. Individually, the numbers of such works appear dull: collectively,

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they afterwards become highly amusing.

7th.—Read and sent the opera to Mr. Harris, with a letter. Walked to Godwin. He proceeds with his novel. Gave a favourable account of Fenwick's pamphlet on Coigley.

8th.—Began to consider my new comedy, which I am very desirous of enriching with numerous incidents.

9th.—Debrett blames Robinson for publishing another translation of the voyage of Perouse; that already published by Johnson, being complete, the size octavo. R.'s edition is to be quarto, the plates in a grander style. Debrett's phrase was, he would burn his fingers. Meditated on the comedy. Conceived two incidents arising from the poverty of my characters, of a pawnbroker's shop, and an antique ring. Dined with Geiseveiller, and G——. His German friends came after dinner.

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F—— displayed some knowledge in Grammar; but was laughed at by me and G——, for being a disciple of Kant.

10*th.*—Rose at seven, in good spirits, and apparently excellent health; persuaded, as I had been for some time, that my disease was gone, and my constitution improved. While eating my breakfast, soon after eight, was seized with a fifth fit of hemorrhoidal colic. The pain as on former occasions excruciating, yet resisted with so much determination by me, that I am persuaded its violence was considerably abated. I continued very ill through the day. In the night my dreams were extremely vivid, often disagreeable, but not always. I read and composed poetry, that never had any other existence; engaged in metaphysical disputes; and busied myself with the plot of a comic opera. I conceived a no-

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bleman and his servant, Spaniards, to have arrived at a castle with immense walls and turrets; and that the first thing the nobleman said, must be to tell his servant, that they were now come to the place of action, and must make their way into that castle. The various obstacles and incidents which this would afford, delighted me, while dreaming. A few years ago, having a slight fever, and lying awake in the night, I found I could speak extempore verses on any given subject, (for I proposed two or three to myself) many of them approaching excellence, and the others full of high sounding words, and such as would be thought excellent by some. Fear of increasing the fever, made me rather endeavour to calm and appease my mind, than either to proceed, or try to remember those I had made, which might amount to above thirty lines in number, as I

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believe. Have found nearly the same facility occasionally, when actually writing poetry, after having considered my subject a certain time, and made a certain number of verses, or rather, after rouzing the faculties. In my sleep I have read many a page of poetry, that never was written. Others have told me they have done the same. Mr. N—— says he has several times gone to bed with his mind wearied by considering a question of science which he could not resolve, has slept or dozed, and the resolution has intruded so forcibly upon his thoughts, that it has awaked him.

11*th*.—Sent for Dr. Pitcairne. After he was gone, the pain rather increased till I rose, half an hour after, when I experienced some relief. Was induced to examine the nature of pain, and found that it is not, and from the nature of the human frame, cannot be,

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incessant. Could it be so, it must soon destroy the patient. Sensations are impelled upon us. Trifles, the tickling of a hair, the trains of ideas which pain itself begets, divert the attention. These intervals appear to be short in proportion to the intensity of the pain. Played a game at chess, with Geiseveiller: at the beginning with great brilliancy; at the end, with great stupidity. Received a well written letter from Mrs. B——, and the opera from Harris.

12*th*.—Harris firmly of opinion the opera will be a good after-piece, but a dangerous first-piece, I obliged to yield, the slave of my circumstances. He agreed to give me two hundred and fifty pounds for the piece, and the copy-right; and, should it run twenty nights, to make the sum three hundred. Urged me to proceed with my comedy, which I promised, if possible,

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to send at the close of November. Underwood, a young artist, called to see my pictures. He was full of admiration, but he is a youth. Godwin called to enquire after my health, and Mrs. Foulkes.

13*th*.—Pitcairne called, behaved very kindly, and refused his fee. I could not visit Mr. G——, who had invited me. The Parrys, Colonel B——, Mrs. F——, and Geiseveiller called. Yesterday and to-day, amidst the pain, I reduced the opera, but not completely.

14*th*.—Mrs. F—— called: and Geiseveiller before and after seeing the Road to Ruin for the first time at the Haymarket. This perhaps is the only theatre in the three kingdoms, Drury-Lane and the Opera-House excepted, at which it has not been acted more probably fifty times than once. The custom of the theatres prevents its being performed in London, except

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at Covent-Garden, where it first appeared.

15th.—Wrote to Harris and Robinson. Went to Mrs. B——, who requested my advice and aid, concerning a novel. A lively woman, upwards of sixty; widow of Dr. B——. From a printer's mark in the margin, there is reason to suspect her novel has been clandestinely printed. If not, it certainly was in preparation for the press. Completed the reduction of the opera; and proceeded, as the day before, with reading Middleton's Cicero, and correcting P——'s tragedy.

16th.—Visited by Dr. Pitcairne, to whom I had sent. Received his fee, is to call on Saturday. Smith, the surgeon, Mrs. F——, Samuel S——, visitors. Read Wild Oats, (having this day received O'Keefe's works) a farce, but one in which much invention and

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feeling are displayed. Wrote an air to Dan Cupid, in Old Clothesmah.

17*th*.—Went to Debrett's, after taking the warm sea-bath. Col. B—— and others praised the Cheltenham waters, as excellent for bilious affections. Walked home, not in the least fatigued.

18*th*.—Visited by Dr. Pitcairne. Corrected tragedy.

19*th*.—Walked into the Park, but overpowered with fatigue and heat, took rest in Whitehall chapel: was too giddy to pay much attention to the paintings of Rubens.

20*th*.—Pitcairne called, thinks I ought to eat meat, refused his fee. Hugh Trevor, and Road to Ruin, sent to Geiseveiller.

21*st*.—Mr. Ramsey, who had acted as a clergyman and physician in the West Indies, returning, was one of the first promoters, by various pamphlets,

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of the enquiry into the slave-trade. An agent of the planters wrote against him, accusing him of want of humanity in his treatment of the sick slaves. He was advanced in years, and much agitated; the weather was hot, he made a journey, and wrote to contradict the calumny. This brought on an inward hemorrhage, of which he died. Mr. Armstrong gave me the above account; adding, that there scarcely could be a more humane man than Mr. Ramsey. In the present state of my disorder, I am equally afraid of eating and fasting. Debility threatens me on one hand with the loss of power to repel the disease: and not improbably another fit, every mouthful I swallow. Patience and cheerfulness, experience tells me, are my best aids. I am patient, but cannot sufficiently recollect myself, so as to assume that constant cheerfulness which pain so frequently disturbs. This

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should be a temper of mind inculcated from infancy.

22nd.—The perseverance with which I endeavour to notice, and remember my own sensations has occasioned Mr. Armstrong to accuse me of being subject to violent and false alarms. He is mistaken. The consciousness I have of serenity, is too firm and permanent to be a deception; but I am persuaded my cure must depend on a still stricter attention to facts. Dr. Pitcairne came, prescribed, and again refused his fee. Mr. Godwin called, and Captain Johnson, an intelligent Scotch seaman, trading to Bremen and Hamburg; says the Dutch are nearly as good sailors as the English: as a proof, they, like the English, will navigate a small trader with six hands, for which the French would require twelve, and the Spaniards twenty; yet the navigation and work, are best done on board the English and

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Dutch, Geiseveiller, Mrs. Shield, and T. and B. Mercier, called.

OCTOBER *3d.*—I now mean to recommence my diary, which has been interrupted by the disease so often before mentioned, on its coming to a crisis, which was all but mortal.

Went to Debrett's. Met B—— and Parry. Saw Emery and Mrs. Mills in second and third acts of the Road to Ruin. Both have merit. Emery the most. Second illumination night for Nelson's victory. Passed through the mean streets leading to the Seven Dials. The poor did not illuminate. I was in a coach, being too weak to walk.

4th.—Called on Carlisle. Visited P—— and bride; a woman of pleasing manners and intelligent countenance. On return met J. Bannister and Wathen. Dined at Kensington Gore with Mr. and Mrs. B—— and J. Parry.

5th.—Mr. Attwood came by ap-

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pointment, and received from me the score of "When sharp is the frost, &c." composed by me, but corrected by Mr. Shield for the opera of the Old Clothesman. Sent back the manuscript by him to the theatre. Called on by J. Bannister.

6*th.*—Six pints of sweet wine given me by J. Bannister.

7*th.*—Music. Haydn. Fanny accompanied by Messrs. Watts and Mackenzie. Mr. Henry present. Dined at Turnham Green by invitation. Complaint of the G—— family of the want of rational society. The villas of the place having become the country houses of wealthy but ignorant town tradesmen. Butchers, tailors, tallow-chandlers, &c. who make these their holiday and Sunday seats. Message to N—— from G——, inviting communication, as well as to dine, and further intercourse. Whimsical disputes of half-

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drunken passengers in the coach, on my return, concerning, and descriptive of Nelson's victory. Each man, according to his own account, minutely acquainted with all the occurrences.

8th.—Called on N—— to deliver the message from G——. Apothecary at Debrett's affirms there are letters in town of Buonaparte taken with his dispatches; particularly one to his wife, accusing the Directory of having purposely betrayed him into an irretrievable situation of danger. I learnt from Mr. N——'s common-place book that it was on the 11th of March, 1796, that he, Arthur O'Connor, Dr. Parr, (Bellendenus) Godwin, Mackintosh, Opie, Powel (a young Oxonian brought by Parr), and Col. B——, dined with me. I consider the meeting of so many celebrated as well as extraordinary men, as an occurrence worthy of being remembered.

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9*th*.—Met Weld at Debrett's, who congratulated me on my recovery in a very friendly manner. Drank tea and sat part of the evening with Mr. and Mrs. Kemble (the father and mother of Mrs. Siddons.) She, except her usual complaints of rheumatism, cheerful and conversable. We talked of Hereford, Ludlow, Worcester races, Leominster, Bewdley, Bromsgrove, Droitwich and Worcester again, as places I had played in while in the Kemble company.

10*th*.—Read the papers at Debrett's. Weld asked Parson —— where Buonaparte is at present? In India, past all doubt, was his answer. I remarked that the parson had always been a fast, but fanciful traveller.

11*th*.—The day rainy; played five games at billiards before dinner. Went in the evening to see "Lovers' Vows" played for the first time at Covent Garden. Translated from the German by

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some retainer at court, as Mrs. Inchbald told Mr. Robinson, but corrected and altered by her. My legs so swelled that I could only stay the first four acts; which at times made me laugh, and cry heartily. Saw the Parrys at the theatre. James, as usual, fastidious and dissatisfied.

12*th*.—John Parry at Debrett's, praised the whole play, including the fifth act, of last night. B——, the miniature painter, with Bannister, called: B—— saw my pictures, which he praised very much. Sold Bannister the copy of Wilson for five guineas. Finished translating the first act of Kotzebue's Indian in England, which has employed me five or six days; and as I intend essentially to alter the character of Samuel or Balaam, more time will be employed in the revisal. This character has *keeping* in the original but not enough of the *vis comica*.

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13*th*.—Walked to Brompton to return Mr. S——'s call. Not at home. Back on foot to Debrett's: obliged to rest several times.

14*th*.—Gave young Watts the letters of recommendation for the opera band, to P—— and Salomon. Picture-dealer's son, near Stratford-Place, brought a little oval Wilson, bought of him by Bannister, to shew me. The water enchantingly transparent, the sky scarcely less excellent, the composition in itself trifling, but most happily contrived to produce contrast. Bannister came soon after with another Wilson, which I think doubtful, yet a charming picture if a copy. I mean as far as respects the right hand part, the sky, and the distances. The figure seated is an admirable thought, and no less admirably managed. The massy dark wood (said to be Hornsey wood), appeared too lifeless for Wilson; and a

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person who called afterwards with Mr. Heath (I believe Corbould) said he knew the original, of which this was a copy. The price of the two, the picture-dealer told me, was fifteen pounds. Called with Bannister on Wathen, and afterwards on J. Aickin, who is determined to resign. Forebodings of bankruptcy, such trifles as wood and canvass not to be had; yet three thousand guineas lately given for an estate. Cumberland sent his Tiberius, which had been repeatedly refused, as a new play, to the theatre. It was cheerfully received till the title was read, and then immediately returned. A letter from C—— to Aickin, stated that it was a mistake to suppose it the same Tiberius; it was no longer a tragedy; and if magic, music, scenery, and dialogue, could interest an audience, he had greater expectations from this, than from any piece he had ever produced. It was

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the most laboured, the oftenest revised, and the best written, of all his works. The letter concluded with an appeal to posterity. B—— and K—— were invited to spend a week at the country house of C——. B—— acknowledged he was partial to a good supper, and K—— the same. Of this article C—— was sparing. I suppose, gentlemen, said he, you are no supper-eaters, a little bread and cheese and small beer is all you take. Their false modesty and contrary wishes made them feel awkward and look silly, but they confirmed him in his supposition. When supper time came, the bread and cheese and small beer appeared. They flattered themselves, however, that a bottle of wine would be the successor. They were deceived: not a drop of wine was brought. Two or three nights made them weary of this; and on one day, they announced their

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intention of departing the next. If so, gentlemen, said the host, I mean to give you a treat this evening before you leave me; and such a treat! But I do not wish to anticipate. This put them in high spirits; they imagined a couple of fowls, with good old port or madeira, would be served up; and they had highly whetted their fancies with this supposition. The evening came, and with it the treat. C—— approached with a "now, gentlemen, you shall have it; you will find whether I keep my word. Here it is. I suppose you have heard of it? Tiberius, I can assure you the best of all my works." So saying, he spread his manuscript, and began to read. K—— without ceremony, fell asleep in the first act. B—— with great difficulty listened through the second, when the author luckily became tired of his task, either from the labour of reading, or the drowsiness of his auditors.

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15*th*.—Walked out before noon, intending to proceed half way to Hammersmith, and then take coach; but finding I had not motive enough to overcome my weakness, turned back and went to the billiard table, where I played an hour and a half. Such is the efficacy of having a motive.

16*th*.—Nobody at Debrett's. Finished translating the second act of the Indians. Mr. Carlisle called. I not at home.

17*th*.—Called on Carlisle. Saw a picture of fish well painted, but praised by him extravagantly.

18*th*.—Walked to Debrett's and King's auction room. Saw Sturt, M. P. and Parry, jun. Mr. P—— called in the forenoon. Praised the passion and power of language with which my tragedy, he says, is written.

19*th*.—Finished translating the Indians. Called on Opie; saw his view of St. Michael's mount, a moon-light,

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the manner hard, but the scenery and effects grand, and the composition good. A well painted portrait likewise of Dr. A——. Went to Birch, saw a Berghem, as he said, but which I doubt; a good picture. Walked from thence with Bannister, to Simpson's (picture cleaner). Saw the famous Niobe landscape by Wilson, and another by him, lately bought of Sir William Beechy, which Sir William told me was, according to Farrington's account, partly the work of Wilson, and partly of Farrington. Simpson angrily asserts Farrington never touched the picture, and asks fifty guineas for it.

20*th*.—Called on Sir Francis Bourgeois, saw the additional pictures of Desenfans. He, as usual, spoke highly in praise of Kemble. Weld very civil at Debrett's. Billiards in the evening. Compton, auctioneer, Moore, the attorney, another person, and Palmer,

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jun. author of the epilogue to "Lovers' Vows" came in. All extremely civil to me. When I returned home, found Salomon, who accompanied Fanny with his usual feeling and enthusiasm. Spoke in raptures of Haydn, which well accorded with my own sentiments. Staid till one o'clock, and occasioned me to eat too much supper. Promised to favour Watts, if in his power. Is desirous of setting an English opera.

21*st*.—Called on young Watts concerning the opera engagement. Saw Da Vinci's battle of the Standard by Edelinck, a proof at Edmonds's, upholsterer, cost him two guineas; cheap, I believe, at five. Saw Mrs. Shield. After dinner, was above an hour walking with Fanny to the top of Oxford-Street and back.

22*d*.—Wrote to Shield. Read the papers. Letter from Dr. Parry, advising me against the Bath waters,

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Dined with Robinson. Thursday, Robinson and myself are to exchange acquittances.

23d.—Called on Aickin. Debts accumulating, business neglected, promises never kept. Hammersley's receiving clerk in the treasury, the whole in a state of disorder, yet the houses great. The Walkers, of Manchester, ruined by the war and ministerial persecutions. Francis and T—— at Debrett's. The latter, as usual, sanguine in describing the progress of Buonaparte, whom he conveys to India with great facility, asserting, Egypt and the revolutionizing of crocodiles, were not the objects of Buonaparte.

24th.—Returned Mr. Boaden's call, and there saw a female portrait, said to be by Leonardo da Vinci, but I think not, though an excellent old picture. Met Banks, Weld, and Bosville, at Debrett's.

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25*th*.—Called on Mr. Compton, who advises no sale of effects till the spring. Proceed daily, but slowly, in correcting the Indians. Papers at Debrett's. Robinson did not keep his appointment.

26*th*.—Compton, auctioneer, called and looked at books and pictures. Debrett's. Wrote to Mr. P——. His wife ill.

27*th*.—Clementi called, but Fanny was out. Mr. M—— called. He attends the Old Bailey bar, from a desire to save the lives of the culprits. Talked a little metaphysics. I read Pope's character of Atticus to him.

28*th*.—Called on ——, and conversed with Mr. Buller on occult and final causes. Saw Tobin's brother. Two girls of the town, walking in Newman Street, praised the goodness of God; and, as the weather had been very rainy for some days, they hoped his goodness would

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extend itself to render it fair all the next week, that they might walk the streets in comfort. A man being tried for a capital offence at the Old Bailey; the jury retired to consider of their verdict. The three principal witnesses had been ordered out of court, after having given their testimony, but stood in the passage at the door. The reward for convicting the man, as usual, was forty pounds. The jury returned, and pronounced the fatal sentence, Guilty. As soon as the sound reached these witnesses, they jumped up, clapped their hands, and exclaimed to each other, Guilty! Guilty! M—— was in court and witnessed the transaction.

29*th*.—F——, jun. came to ask me to petition the proprietors of Drury-Lane Theatre for a dresser's place, for the wife of a door-keeper, who had died suddenly, in the exercise of his office. I could not comply, because of the

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very improper conduct of these proprietors in refusing to notice the letters I wrote to them, when they ceased, without any apparent cause, to play "Knave or Not?" But I agreed to write a letter for the woman to copy in her own name.

30*th.*—Wrote the letter; F—— having appointed to come for that purpose at nine, was with me at ten. Young S——, and B——'s nephew, came in their father's name to ask for orders. Both families are rich, but I complied and procured them. B—— and N——, M. P. being at Brighton, where Major R—— was, N—— praised the Major as a man of great information, his friend, and one with whom B—— ought to be intimate. B—— said, they had met and spoken, and as there could be no great harm, he would accompany N—— to visit R——. They happened to meet him, and R—— pre-

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sently took occasion to tell N——, that, from the principles he professed, and the speeches he had made in parliament, he could not but consider him as an enemy to his king and country, he therefore desired they might have no more intercourse. B—— laughed at N—— and his friend, but remarked the Major was an honest man, for most people would have said as much when he was absent, without the courage to declare such sentiments to his face, Hare, St. John, and others, at Debrett's.

31*st*.—P—— and I had a dispute concerning Shakspeare. He asserted, quoting Gray and Warton as his supporters, that the thing in which Shakspeare excels all other writers, and in that only, is sudden bursts of passion. I allowed he did excel other writers in this, as in almost every other part of composition, but that he excelled them most in the full flow of passion. I doubt

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I was abrupt and dogmatical, for he appears to be a good-natured man; yet I could see he went away displeased.

NOVEMBER 1*st*.—Met Weld and H—— at Debrett's. Pitt met H—— on horseback, the day on which it was determined to strike Fox's name out of the list of privy-counsellors, and made such strange faces at him, that H—— went to Brookes's and reported him mad; on which a person present said, "that accounts for a strange speech, as I thought, of Grenville, who affirmed, that while Pitt was in his present temper, he would not see him, but in the presence of a third person." The —— said to be of the Orange party, and inimical to Cornwallis. Weld affirms, that since London was a city, it never had such immense exports as at this moment.

2nd.—Wrote yesterday an apology to P——, for my warmth in dispute;

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and received a very friendly and proper answer to-day.

4th.—Music at Mr. Mackenzie's. Haydn's symphony quintetto and Mozart: both men of uncommon genius, but the latter impatient after novelty and superior excellence, often forgets the flow of passion in laboriously hunting after new thoughts which, when thus introduced, have the same effect in music, as the *concetti* of the Italians have in poetry; and for these Mozart is frequently extolled as superior to Haydn.

6th.—Went and settled with Mr. Robinson, that is, I made over to him the copies and copyright of "School for Arrogance." "Deserted Daughter," "Man of Ten Thousand," "Knave or Not," "Hugh Trevor," and "Anna St. Ives," in consideration of an acquittal of sums due to him, to the amount of 340*l.*, and a conditional pro-

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missory note on his part to pay me 150*l.* more, when the copies and copy-right shall have realized to him the sum of 504*l.* Procured a copy of the "School for Ingratitude," advertised by Bell gratis, that is, at the author's expense; he being angry, or rather, enraged at the plagiarism which he (falsely and ridiculously) accuses Messrs. Sheridan and Richardson of committing, by communicating his manuscript to Mr. Reynolds to aid him in writing the comedy of "Cheap Living."

7th.—Called on Carlisle. Conversed on the necessity of cultivating youthful sports and habits in mature and advanced age. Bought books at King's. Met Harris, the manager, and soon after, Tierney, M. P.; both congratulated me on my recovery.

8th.—Read Walpole's Painters.—Looked over and considered the scenes of my new comedy, of which I have

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sketched about six. Papers at Debrett's; picture sale in Cloak-Lane. A walk altogether of about seven miles. Copies and rubbish at the sale. Sent Robinson an advertisement of my works, with an order to Symonds to deliver the Narrative, and Windham's letter.

11*th*.—Called on, and conversed with Geiseveiller concerning his new enterprise. Saw a proof of Duncan's Victory, by Fittler, which I think but indifferent. Went to, and conversed with, Aickin on the subject of the Exiles. Kelly very desirous of having something of mine to set. Aickin informed me that Tobin has written two dramatic pieces.

12*th*.—Wrote to T——. Read the papers.

14*th*.—Wrote two songs for the "Exiles," the second of Balaam, and the first of Harry. Dined on Monday with P——; Platonist Taylor, and

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D—— present. Taylor, intolerant and abusive to all who do not pretend to understand and put faith in his Platonic jargon. Had he the power, according to P——, he would bring every man of us to the stake. From my own experience, P——'s description is scarcely exaggerated; but though a bigot, Taylor is an honest one. D——, on the contrary, asked P—— whether he had any principles? and when P—— expressed his surprise at such a question, D—— declared he had none. Saw Dr. Towers at Debrett's; his democracy still maintains its violence; I should scarcely exceed if I said its virulence. He asked me if the universal defection had not made me turn aristocrat. I answered, that I supposed my principles to be founded in truth, that is, in experience and fact: that I continued to believe in the perfectibility of man, which the blunders and passions

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of ignorance might apparently delay, but could not prevent; and that the only change of opinion I had undergone was, that political revolutions are not so well calculated to better man's condition, as during a certain period I, with almost all the thinking men in Europe, had been led to suppose. The Doctor doubted man's perfectibility; was more inclined to think him a radical sinner; and said, as I held such opinions, I was, no doubt, a Necessarian, to which I readily assented. I do not know what connexion the Doctor found between perfectibility and necessity; though such connexion does certainly exist. Among other things I said, the best of us at present understood morality very imperfectly: his sanctity took offence at the assertion, and he replied, that some of us (meaning, no doubt, himself, and, perhaps, others who

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hold his tenets) understood it in full perfection, at which I could only smile and dissent.

15*th*. Saw pictures on show at Christie's, a wretched collection. Met H—— in the room to-day, and M—— yesterday; though both excel as engravers, their remarks shewed they had but little judgment of pictures; a circumstance I have had frequent occasion to observe in engravers, and indeed in painters, though not perhaps so generally. 'Tis seldom that a tolerable painter is not a good judge of the mechanical defects or excellences of a picture. Read at Debrett's, in the papers, the manly behaviour of Tone, tried at Dublin, and cast for high-treason. Johnson the bookseller sent to the King's Bench Prison for selling Wakefield's pamphlet.

16*th*. Read the first act and part of the second of the Indian Exiles, to Ban-

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nister; and am convinced, by the effect it produced upon him, that it is much too dull for representation. I doubt how far it is worth the trouble of alteration. Met Sir F—— B——, lately come to town, at Debrett's. He was very kind. Went to the picture-sale at Christie's. The stable-yards, asses, and pigs of Morland, as usual, fetched a good price.

17*th.* M——l called, and, speaking on that subject, expressed his sorrow and surprise that W—— should be acquainted with M——, whom M——l, like most other people, considers as a very odd character. I mentioned what I conceived to be artifice in the conduct of W—— as a public preacher. M——l defended him against the charge, and gave me the following information. The famous Dr. Franklin, the present Sir J—— B——, Dr. Solander, Bentley, the partner of

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Wedgewood, and perhaps some few others, were desirous of putting a plan, conceived by Franklin, into practice; which was, to have a kind of chapel, or meeting-house, where all matters of faith should be omitted, and pure morality taught. W——, at that time a dissenting teacher from Wales, was fixed on as the preacher at this new chapel, but at this period, Franklin was obliged to conceal himself from Government on American affairs, and remained some days shut up in the house of W——, who at that time was a teacher of youth. The scheme, however, did not drop. A small chapel in Margaret-Street, Cavendish-Square, was hired to these moralists at one part of the Sunday, and to Methodists on the other. B—— and Solander acted with great shyness, if not hypocrisy, and instead of countenancing W—, and promoting the plan, they now and

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then peeped into the chapel, and got away as fast as they decently could. Bentley and M——, the Member for T——, were more open in their conduct, but Bentley and W—— disagreed, because Bentley urged him to insist on the immortality of the soul, and W—— replied he could and would teach no other doctrines than such as agreed with the original plan. M—l attributed the failure of the plan to this defection of B——, Solander, and Bentley, but here I think he is mistaken. I attended this chapel myself, and became acquainted with W—, whose manner was much too dry and cold, and his reasoning too confused either to warm the passions, or sufficiently interest the understanding. He afterwards saw me at the Sunday evening society, where discussion and the reading of philosophical papers were the business of the meetings; at these

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I read some papers, and my manner was so far animated, as to induce W—— to propose to me that he and I should resume the plan of the chapel, and be joint preachers, which I positively declined. Since this time, we have met and spoke in the streets, but nothing more.

18*th*.—Walked to Hampstead and dined with P——. He asked explanation of various of the corrections I advised and had made with pencil-marks in his tragedy. I had only gone through the four first acts, and he requested I would revise the fifth. Speaking of Dr. G—— he said, that in 1792, it was his custom to declaim vehemently at the Stratford coffee-house, in favour of republicanism; and finding the alarm that was raised, and the tide turning, he soon after wrote in praise of the King, of mixed monarchy, and of the peculiar happiness

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derived from it by the English. The doctor had been tutor to Lord H——, for which an annuity was settled on him of a hundred a year. About the time of his turning royalist, Dr. —— died, and the place of ———, becoming vacant, G—— went to Lord H——, who was intimate with Dundas; and proposed, if his lordship would procure him this place, he would resign the annuity. The proposal was accepted, the place procured, and the doctor's loyalty and royalty confirmed. Speaking of his literary talents, P—— joined with me in thinking them rather below than above mediocrity. We differed in opinion concerning the perfectibility of man, against which he quoted the traditional and written authority of five thousand years, treating the supposition with great contempt, and some degree of humourous ridicule. According to him, men

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grow more corrupt so rapidly, that in his youthful dealings with booksellers, &c., he met with nothing but open fairness, and at present he is obliged to be continually on his guard against cheating and chicanery. I could only answer, that for my own part, I found no such general depravity to combat; and that granting it were so, this was a narrow ground, belonging to temporary and local incident, by which the great question could not be decided.

20th. Called on Sir Francis Burdett, who had just been reading in the newspaper the King's intended speech to-day, (which for some sessions past has been published the morning before it is spoken) and eagerly asked my opinion what he, as an honest member of Parliament, ought to say, thinking it highly objectionable. I read it over, and pointed out parts which I consider, some as vicious in principle, others

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false in fact. He repeated the summary or skeleton of what he intended to say, part of which was sound sense, and part a repetition of questions a thousand times ineffectually asked. During the day, sketched the beginning scene of Hobson and Dobson.

21*st.* — Worked at my comedy. Fairfax and Curtail, Headlong and the tradesmen, &c. Several politicians at Debrett's, canvassing the King's speech, &c.

22*nd.*—Met a political parson at Debrett's, whose first recollection was where he was to dine. Said that Brown, the Egyptian traveller, affirmed Buonaparte is safe in Egypt, and that Egypt was alone the grand object of the expedition. Received a friendly letter from Dr. Parry.

23*rd.*—Sketched in part the scenes of Melford and Caroline, Caroline and

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Fairfax, and Caroline and the wife of Norman. Think of rejecting the idea of twin-sisters. A wicked recruiting hand-bill of Ireland, published in to-day's Chronicle. Spoke of it to General Hastings and others. It excited universal abhorrence.

24*th.*—Walked to S———'s, Paternoster-row, for the account between us, which he sent in the evening, wishing me to deduct seventy-six of the Narrative, and twelve of the Letter to Windham, which he pretends to have been lost by the binder, and this since the last settling, during which period the account states only three sold. Saw two or three good pictures at Nodin's, Leadenhall-street. Met Osmond, whom I had not seen for some years. He remarked, I was much altered and broken. He was the same to me. Time effects these changes, especially, as in my case,

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with the addition of illness, in despite of the little wisdom we at present possess. Conversed with Ward, the pugilist; a man who has been remarkable for uncommon agility, as well as strength and courage; his language illiterate, his countenance and manner vulgar, yet to a certain degree pleasing, and his intellect remarkably quick. He was once so famous at fives, that he beat every opponent, with right, left, or back hand, by his extreme activity. He is now among the best players at billiards. The method practised by pugilists, to bring themselves into condition, as they term it, is air and exercise, regular hours, not more than a pint of wine a-day, lean meat, especially beef, and fowls, with few vegetables. This regimen may be instructive to persons wishing to recover activity and strength. Met Jew K——, who from his conversation and physio-

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gnomy, does not appear to grow more wise and placable, as he grows older. Again invited me to renew my visits, which I do not intend, and spoke of the frequency of those of G——, as I suspect, with exaggeration. Soon afterwards, I was in some danger of being run over by B—— D——, his son-in-law, driving a kept woman furiously in a curricle. The coincidence of these rencontres was whimsical.

25th.—Called on Stoddart, not at home. Received a letter from him complaining of marked disrespect from me. Answered by truly denying any such intentional behaviour. Godwin, Carlisle, and the two Tobins to dinner, Stoddart came in the evening. Carlisle spoke of a woman who had been five-and-twenty years in bed, from a cancerous disease, and who is still living.

26th.—Saw J. Robinson, Sir Francis Burdett, and Este, at Debrett's. It is

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said, in a newspaper, that Kotzebue is imprisoned by the Imperial Government, for his democratic principles. Mr. Aspin, who printed Fenwick's pamphlet on Coigley, called.

27th.—T. North, Lord Thanet, &c. at Debrett's. The ravages of the yellow fever at Philadelphia and New York, detailed in to-day's Chronicle. Courtney says, he lately read in one of Dr. Franklin's letters, a passage where the doctor foretold epidemical diseases, if draining and cleanliness were not more carefully practised.

28th.—Called to settle with S——, reminded him that the preface I wrote, and the proofs I read for him, while a prisoner with him in Newgate, had I charged them, if charged at twelve guineas, would not have been more than a third of the value of my time, yet I had charged nothing, nor should,

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unless he contested a fair account. This induced him immediately to allow the balance due on the sale of my books. Papers at Debrett's. On Thursday the 22d, Fanny met the Miss Harts, drinking tea with Miss Banks; they are the daughters of Horne Tooke. Horne Tooke takes some pleasure in praising his daughters, which he sometimes does by those equivocatory falsehoods, which are one of his principal pleasures. Of the eldest, he says, "all the beer brewed in this house is of that young lady's brewing." It would be equally true were he to say, all the hogs killed in this house are of that young lady's killing, for they brew no beer. When a member of the Constitutional Society, I have frequently heard him utter sentences, the first part of which would have subjected him to death, by the

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law, but for the salvo that followed; and the more violent they were, thus contrasted and equivocatory, the greater was his delight.

30th.—P—— to dinner. Manuscript letters of James I., Prince Henry, &c. in the Museum. P—— had been reading them, says the character in which they are written, is uncommonly beautiful; and that many of them addressed to Prince Henry, were from projectors and improvers with which that time abounded. Henry delighted in patronizing and encouraging them. P—— of opinion that the high character given of Henry, was well deserved.

DECEMBER *5th.*—Saw Cumberland's Word for Nature first time, was much pleased. He too often unravels his whole fable, which is slight enough, in the first or second acts. In this, some

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little suspense is preserved, and very much of those generous feelings, which interest while they improve. His usual self-conceit was exceedingly prominent in the prologue, and sufficiently so in the play. The epilogue was an incongruous farrago, and took away much of the pleasant feeling the piece had left. It likewise was egotistical. In the dialogue, he was guilty of his common fault, a repeated play upon words, little better than quibbling; and though not held in so much contempt, inferior perhaps to punning, of which it is but a meagre species. His characters of the termagant wife, hen-pecked husband, and old officer, are repetitions of himself: that is, of Ironsides, with Sir Benjamin and Lady Dove, in the Brothers; except that in the Brothers, if I remember rightly, the three characters are much better drawn. The chief,

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and almost the sole merit of the present comedy centers in the youth Leonard, to whom all the rest are very properly made subservient adjuncts. In this comedy, as in the Wheel of Fortune, there are some few impertinent excrescences. These two pieces, however, have more of wholeness and simplicity in the fable, than most others in the English language, of those at least that, because of their insipidity, are not forgotten. These are the thoughts that occur after having once seen the comedy. Perhaps when I read and consider it more attentively, I may correct or alter my opinion. It was received.

6th.—The papers to-day have been less favourable in the account given of Cumberland's comedy, than I supposed they would have been.

7th.—Coming from Debrett's, I met S——, who likewise spoke unfavourably of Cumberland's comedy.

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8*th*.—Call from Mrs. ——. She was much affected at being told by a tailor, who works for Mr. ——, that my amanuensis had reported my opinion of Mr. —— to be, that he was not a man of principle. I replied, that if I had ever conveyed a thought to my amanuensis which might be so interpreted, it was, when dictating this diary, the contents of which I supposed he would have regarded as sacred, and not have repeated to the disturbance of any person named in it. I added, that the diary was intended as a memorandum of my present conduct, opinions, and intercourse, and to serve in future, as a depository of facts, which both I and others might wish should be preserved. Many of them must doubtless be trifling, others may turn to use, and that this end is desirable in our most insignificant actions. I told her that if by the word unprincipled,

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any planned intention to defraud was understood, I never had expressed such an opinion of Mr. ——, because I had no such opinion; though his conduct was reprehensible, yet I was satisfied his intentions were honest and kind. The assessed taxes the chief subject of conversation now at Debrett's. There was yesterday in the Chronicle, what was called "a scale," stating, as is the case, according to the proposed bill, that a man of five-hundred a year landed property, which will sell for (say) twenty thousand pounds, during his life, or leave five-hundred a year to his descendants, is to pay fifty pounds per annum assessment. That a man of five-hundred a year annuity, which will sell for only a small part of that sum, and, if not sold, leave nothing to descendants, must pay the same. And lastly, that a man making five-hundred a year by his profession, which during

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life, will sell for nothing, and leave nothing at his death, must still pay fifty pounds annual assessment. Went with Fanny and Mrs. and Miss B—— to Covent-Garden, to a new comedy performed there, written by Reynolds, called "Laugh when you Can." A strange mixture it would be to compare it, as a whole, with Cumberland's, yet it has sallies of humour, which Cumberland cannot reach, and will probably have a temporary popularity.

9th.—Called on C—— who shewed me a plan for a new school of anatomy.

11th.—Saw P—— at Debrett's, told him my intention to go abroad.

12th.—Mr. H—— at Debrett's remarked that Canning's fine speech in the House of Commons, was rather a reply to what Canning supposed Tierney would have said, than to what Tierney did say.

13th.—At Debrett's, Weld rallied

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Tarleton on his approaching marriage, and military appointment. Spoke with me concerning Sheridan's opera. T——r having quarrelled with S——, swore he would never be friends again; for he never pulled off his hat to him in the street, but it cost him fifty pounds, and if he trusted himself in the same room, a hundred. S—— still supposed to be concerned in the Haymarket. At Opie's in the evening. Northcote present. Northcote animated, as usual. Related a comic conversation between himself and a frame-maker, who had never heard the name of Northcote, nor noticed it in the prints he had framed, though he remembered the names of Sir Joshua Reynolds, West, Opie, &c. After supper, stories of terror were related.

One, of a lady waked from sleep, who suffered her lap-dog to lie at the foot of her bed, and feeling something

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move, bid the dog lie still, at the same time stretching out her arm, to feel him; but instead of a lap-dog, took hold of a hand. When a voice bid her lie still, make no noise, but deliver her keys. The lady was a woman of courage, and immediately complied, only requesting her daughter might not be disturbed, who was sleeping by her side. She however was mistaken, the daughter had heard the thieves, had risen, slipped on a night-dress, and stealing into another room, gave the alarm, by which the thieves were secured.

Another of a bigotted old lady, who seeing thieves enter her apartment with lights, at midnight, exclaimed to her maid who lay in the same room, "Lie still Betty, for now we shall see the salvation of the Lord!" imagining it was a celestial apparition. The thieves however, were driven away by

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the fury of a poor man, maintained out of charity, who was half an idiot; and who, after the exploit, was made drunk every day, when he went to Plymouth, with drams given him by people, who bribed him to tell the story.

A third, of a gentleman, that having put out his candle, going to bed, read in blazing characters on his curtains, "Confess thy sins, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." On which the gentleman fell on his knees, and, as directed, began to confess his sins aloud: not from terror, but aware it was a trick, meant to terrify him, by a waggish young lady; and hearing a litle bustle on the stair-head, truly supposed that she, and others, were there listening. He confessed as the last and greatest of his sins, that he had seduced the young lady; and, if that might be pardoned him, he would never again be so heinously guilty. The joke was

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understood, and of course, the lady laughed at, instead of the gentleman.

A fourth, of a cook-maid left alone in a country-house, which was attacked by several thieves on the night when she was sitting up, waiting the arrival of the family.. The detail of this story ——, who told it, did not know, except that the fears and courage of the girl being inflamed, finding them to be thieves, and that they were making their way, by widening the aperture of the kitchen gutter, she took up a cleaver, and killed the first man that was creeping forward, then dragged the body away, imitated his voice, encouraged a second to come in, killed him, and thus destroyed them all; after which, growing frantic, she lighted up every room, smeared herself with blood, brandished her dreadful weapon, and was found marching about the house, and to and from the dead bodies, by the

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family, who coming home in the middle of the night, were amazed at the lights from the windows first, and much more afterwards, when they beheld the scene within.

I am here reminded of a tragical story told me by the late Mrs. P——, with the hero of which she was personally acquainted, having, while a child, seen him daily. One Alexander —— of Aberdeen, had seduced a pretty girl, who was pregnant by him. This girl, and one or two others, had risen at two o'clock to wash. While they were at their work, a whistle was heard, and the girl said "that is Sandy, I will go and speak to him." She said this with a kind of wildness and terror in her look, and was persuaded not to go: but she said she must and would, come of it what might, as if herself foreboding some ill. She could not be withheld; but going, said, perhaps she should

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soon be back. The night passed away, however, and instead of returning, if I remember rightly, she was never seen more: though her lover remained for some time in the place, till suspicion became so loud, that he thought proper to go abroad: for there was no proof to detain him, as no one could swear to a whistle, or knew what was become of the girl. After a lapse of years, he returned rich, but always deeply melancholy, and loving to be alone. This behaviour revived the memory of past events, and he was universally shunned, except by children, to whom he was particularly kind, and who therefore frequently played with him, and partook of the good things he gave them.

Discoursing at Opie's on the effects of terror, Northcote related, that two of his brothers were sitting by the fire, and as one of them slept, the other,

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by way of experiment, when he saw him about to wake, sat motionless, without appearing to breathe, and his eyes fixed on one object. The brother who had been asleep, watched him as long as his patience could hold, and then spoke, but received no answer. He spoke again and again, but still the same fixed, motionless, and as he began to dread, lifeless figure, sat before him. He was not a timid man, and the absurd joke ended without any bad consequences. But the picture which he afterwards gave of his own terror, was a strong one. N. also told the following story. A gentleman, followed by a servant in livery, rode into an inn in the West of England, one evening a little before dusk. He told the landlord that he should be detained by business in that part of the country for a few days, and wished to know if there were any amusements

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going on in the town to fill up the intervals of his time. The landlord replied, that it was their race and assize week, and that he would therefore be at no loss to pass away the time. On the gentleman's making answer, that this was lucky, for that he was fond of seeing trials, the other said, that a very interesting trial for a robbery would come on the next day, on which people's opinions were much divided, the evidence being very strong against the prisoner; but he himself persisting resolutely in declaring that he was in a distant part of the kingdom at the time the robbery was committed. His guest manifested considerable curiosity to hear the trial; but as the court would probably be crowded, expressed some doubt of getting a place. The landlord told him, that there could be no difficulty in a gentleman of his appearance getting a place; but that, to prevent

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any accident, he would himself go with him, and speak to one of the beadles. Accordingly they went into court the next morning, and the gentleman was shewn to a seat on the bench. Presently after, the trial began. While the evidence was giving against him, the prisoner had remained with his eyes fixed on the ground, seemingly very much depressed; till being called on for his defence, he looked up, and seeing the stranger, he suddenly fainted away. This excited some surprise, and it seemed at first like a trick to gain time. As soon as he came to himself, on being asked by the judge the cause of his behaviour, he said, Oh, my lord, I see a person that can save my life; that gentleman (pointing to the stranger) can prove I am innocent, might I only have leave to put a few questions to him. The eyes of the whole court were now turned on the gentleman,

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who said he felt himself in a very awkward situation to be so called upon, as did not remember ever to have seen the man before, but that he would answer any question that was asked him. Well then, said the man, don't you remember landing at Dover at such a time? To this the gentleman answered, that he had landed at Dover, not long before, but that he could not tell whether it was on the day he mentioned or not. Well, said he, but don't you recollect that a person in a blue jacket and trowsers carried your trunk to the inn? To this he answered, that of course some person had carried his trunk for him; but that he did not know what dress he wore. But, said the prisoner, don't you remember that the person, who went with you from the boat, told you a story of his being in the service, that he thought himself an ill-used man, and that he shewed you

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a scar he had on one side of his forehead? During this last question, the countenance of the stranger underwent a considerable change, he said he certainly did recollect such a circumstance, and on the man's putting his hair aside, and shewing the scar, he became quite sure that he was the same person. A buzz of satisfaction now ran through the court, for the day on which, according to the prisoner's account, this gentleman had met with him at Dover, was the same on which he was charged with the robbery in a remote county. The stranger however could not be certain of the time, but said that he sometimes made memorandums of dates in his pocket-book, and might possibly have done so on this occasion. On turning to his pocket-book, he found a memorandum of the time he landed from Calais, which corresponded with the prisoner's assertion.

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This being the only circumstance necessary to prove the *alibi*, the prisoner was immediately acquitted, amidst the applause and congratulations of the whole court.——Within less than a month after this, the gentleman who came to the Inn, attended by a servant in livery, the servant who followed him, and the prisoner who had been acquitted, were all three brought back together to the same gaol, for robbing the mail.

14*th*.—The assassination of Buonaparte, the subject at Debrett's.

15*th*.—Met Arthur B——, who disbelieves the assassination of Buonaparte. It was much questioned at Debrett's. T—— loud, in asserting it was impossible that a general officer, surrounded by his staff, should be massacred. Tarleton already imagines himself and his staff, in P——. B—— remarked to me on the triumphant tone of the mi-

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nistry, and their creatures, in announcing this intelligence. It is true enough, but party spirit never yet had understanding.

16*th*. Walked with Tobin into the Park. Met various persons; among others, S——, the surgeon, as flighty and whimsical as usual. He walked with us; dropped us; then came up again; met another acquaintance, stopped with him, was presently with us again; and after first saying I was a deep observer of men and manners, asked me of what profession was the man he met. I had scarcely seen the man's face, and, cutting Addison's joke, desired him to give me the red hot poker out of his pocket, that I might swallow it as a first proof of my skill. He then said the man was a dentist. I replied, I was about to guess he was a Doctor, and should have been tolerably near the mark. Tobin tells me Doctor Beddoes is again

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going to lecture at Bristol on health and its preservation, that he hates physicians, that physicians hate him, and that he wishes to teach each man to be the guardian of his own health. Thomas Wedgewood, Tobin says, is so afflicted with bad digestion, that he is obliged to take several hours' strong exercise every day. Shooting and turning are part of his amusements. Metaphysics, the study he most delighted in. I told Tobin I wished for a school of health, one principal branch of which should be exercise, and its proper direction, tending to move the limbs and muscles in all modes, by running, stooping, &c., and that social games, which should powerfully stimulate, ought to be practised; bowls, trap-ball, &c., in fine weather. Billiards, marbles, and whatever would engage the attention, and give variety of action, should be studied. I mentioned

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the above as those that first occurred to the memory. Parkinson, jun., a good mineralogist. His father was offered twelve thousand pounds, and the title of Baron for his son, by a German Prince (of Hesse, I believe), for the Leverian Museum. It is intended to remove this museum into Bond-street, make scientific arrangements, &c., and exhibit it at half-a-crown, or by annual tickets. At present it does not quite pay the interest of the money. Parkinson, sen., a lawyer, acting chiefly as steward to various persons. Much talk with Tobin, concerning some manuscript pieces written by his brother, and not a little praised by him. Stoddart and Clementi to dinner. Read a scene from Lillo's "Fatal Curiosity" to them. Agnes and Wilmot concerting the murder. Critical remarks by S—— on the language. Called on N——, who mentioned an attack made on him by T—,

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editor of a magazine, meant to rival his Journal. The attack ignorant and artful. I advised either a perfectly good-tempered reply, or silence.

17*th*.—Walked to Westminster, to inquire concerning the picture of Angelica and Medora, but could not find Mr. Bates. Unexpectedly met Colonel Barry at Debrett's, just come to town. Lord Wycombe, speaking of Lord Cornwallis, says, "no man is more open in discussing any question, political, or appertaining to government, except such as relate immediately to his own office, and then, no man more close." G—— related of one B——, a gambler and famous billiard-player, that he was now in total discredit, after having lived in a very high style; to support which, he had been guilty of many notorious gambling frauds. He and one Captain —— met one evening at billiards, and played a

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long rubber for 50*l.*, which B—— easily won. The Captain said he had no more money then, but would come the next night, and play him for his own sum, for he was still convinced he was the better player. The appointment was made, and all the gamblers and sporting people, who heard of it, flocked to the place. Bets to a large amount were laid every game; the Captain won, and emptied most of the spectators' pockets: but the match was not finished, for he and B—— quarrelled, abused each other in very gross language, pretended to strike at each other with their cues, but avoided the blows by dodging, and separated in an apparently extreme heat. A person, however, who had been betting, happening to pass toward Berkeley-square, saw B—— and the Captain, under the wall of Lansdown House, dividing the bank-notes and money of which they had

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robbed the bettors. B—— was dealer to one ———, who kept a faro table; and three nights successively, a man came in towards the close of the play, staked a large sum on the card, and won it, to the total amount of two thousand pounds. He made a fourth attempt, but was refused by the table-keeper. B—— was suspected, and discharged; and was soon after seen dining at the tavern on Richmond-Hill, with the man who had won the two thousand pounds. Gamblers speak with most acrimonious rancour against those of their own set who betray them. They delight in conspiring against all the world besides: but bestow the epithets, thief, robber, rascal, &c. most plentifully when betrayed by one of themselves.

18*th*—.Conversed with E—— at Debrett's concerning L——, who was left joint patentee of Drury-Lane theatre,

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with landed property, houses, &c. of twelve hundred a year, or more. Married a green woman's daughter because she was tall; himself above six feet: and, in a very short time, was little better than a beggar; yet never made any figure, even as a spendthrift. He had last night a benefit at the little theatre in the Haymarket, a poor house.

19*th.*—Breton at Debrett's, spoke of the tricks of Smithfield salesmen. He sent thirty head of cattle to market, came himself, unknown to the salesman, and watched his proceedings; a number, twelve I think, of bad cows were added to his thirty fat bullocks; the whole sold together, and he paid the average price; but made the salesman refund. Farmers are not allowed to sell for themselves, they must employ salesmen.

20*th.*—Mr. H—— observed, that the ship, Orient, had been the evil genius

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of the squadron of Brueys. It had prevented the going into the inner harbour. It would not suffer the squadron to anchor in very shallow water, and by blowing up in the battle did every kind of mischief.

21*st.*—Conversed with Erskine, Sir Francis Burdett, R. Adair, Courtney, Este, and Weld. Erskine of opinion it was wrong to give up agitating the question of reform without doors, i. e. out of the House of Commons. He had before remarked that the people had lost all spirit, which I denied, and, on this occasion, reminded him that the leaders of the people had abandoned them in a cowardly manner, and then had called the people cowards. Sir Francis Burdett is inquiring into the number of persons imprisoned on suspicion, and their treatment, meaning to state the particulars to Parliament. Erskine, as a lawyer, has great talents,

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quick conceptions, acute feelings, and uncommon power over juries; but as a man of grand plans, and inflexible principles, he is far from ranking in the first class. I this day completed my 53rd year.

23d.—Called on Sir William Beechey, who has lately given a delicacy of tint and reflected lights to the shaded side of his faces, which I think admirable; and, as far as my knowledge goes, peculiar to himself. He related the following anecdote of Serres, the ship painter. Serres took a picture or pictures of shipping, from England to the King of France, painted to commemorate some naval exploit of the French, and invited connoisseurs and artists to see his performance. Among the rest was the famous Vernet. Serres waited some time after Vernet had looked at the picture, till he became impatient to hear his opinion, hoping for praise,

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and fearing lest it should not be bestowed. "How do you like my picture," said he, "Mr. Vernet?" "Upon my word, Sir," replied Vernet, "you paint ropes exceedingly well." Nothing could be more satirical, or better mark the genius of the two men, than this reply. Vernet, like a man of genius, painted nature at large, and suggested her minutiæ, but never gave them in detail. Serres was incapable of any thing but detail, in which he was uncommonly accurate. Serres thought he revenged himself on Vernet, by damning him for a fool, that had never known how to paint a ship, which, in his sense, was true enough. He could not paint every shroud, rope, and tackle, &c. all which Serres had laboriously studied.

24th.—Mr. ——— M. P. related an incredible anecdote of the Prince of Sicily; the present prince royal, if I do not mistake: that, being betrothed

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to an archduchess of Austria, and, as they could not meet, Germany, &c. being overrun by the French, being married by proxy, eight months after the marriage, he ordered his attendants to provide child-bed linen; supposing she must be brought to bed in a month, though he had never seen her. I said it was incredible, and he answered it was seriously asserted as a fact.

25th.—Mr. C—— surprised me much by a very liberal and friendly offer of the loan of two or three hundred pounds; thinking it might be want of money that induced me to sell my effects and go abroad. I answered, one motive was, that of being already in debt to persons who never reminded me of it, which I could endure no longer, much less to incur fresh obligations of the same kind; but that his offer was a strong testimony of the goodness of his own heart. That I was

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likewise desirous of familiarizing myself and my daughter, with the true idiom of foreign languages, and the manners of the people; also of reducing my expenses, and of absenting myself till certain prejudices in the public mind, respecting me, should subside.

26th.—Sent the three first acts of the "Lawyer" to Mr. Harris. Walked with B——r to see P——, whose hands are excessively burned by extinguishing fire, which had caught his wife's clothes, and must certainly have burned her to death. His resolution was considerable. When the wife of B——r was sitting for her picture, B—— related the following anecdote. At the time of the last procession, he was painting K. G. who asked if he intended to see the sight, B—— answered in the affirmative. "It will be very fine, B——, very fine." The day after, when sitting, he again said, "Well, B——, did you

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see the procession, B——?" The painter answered he had. "How did you like it, B——? How did you like it?" "Exceedingly." "Had you a good sight, B——?" "A very good one. I saw it from a one pair of stairs, on the top of Ludgate Hill." "That must have been very fine, very fine indeed, B——. I wish I had been in your place. I should like to have seen it myself. But I could see nothing but the back of the coachman." Went to "the Jew and the Doctor" in the evening, which is a tolerably good farce.

27th.—Mr. ——— at Debrett's, wished the Orange men of Ireland might raise another rebellion, and be all cut off and totally destroyed. Such is the miserably vicious state of the minds of the two opposite parties. Nothing will satisfy either, but the extirpation and blood of their opponents.

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Dined with Mr. F——. A Mrs. Remorande came to consult him on law business. Her husband, an Irish officer, in the French service, was guillotined by Robespierre; and she, finding means to secrete five hundred pounds, remitted the money to England. The person afterwards refused payment. She employed an attorney, and was told by another, one M——, the first intended to cheat her; and prevailed on her to let him continue the suit. She complied, and he soon obtained the money; but, instead of receiving it, as she expected, an information was laid against her, and she was taken on suspicion before the Duke of Portland. Her story being heard, the villainous artifice of M—— was seen through, and she was released. He used fresh endeavours, and she was taken before the Westminster justices; but again set free. M—— had given

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instructions, in his own hand-writing, to his servant, how to proceed in accusing her. These were obtained: he was prosecuted, and promised, if they would stop proceedings, the money should be repaid. Her counsel incautiously took his word; and as it was a criminal prosecution, when it was dropped, he was no longer in danger, and mocked their credulity. He was arrested, however, for the debt, and put in the Fleet prison, where he now lies. This woman's story in France was still more remarkable. The outlines of it were these. The papers announcing her husband's death had arrived, and the tragedy was generally known to the inhabitants of St. Omer's, but not to her. The people around her were afraid to tell her of it. She is a woman of quick faculties, observed something remarkably unusual, gloomy, and strange in their countenances,

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and could not conceive the reason. One of them advised her to go to the play, because she was in need of amusement. This ridiculous advice she innocently followed; and her acquaintance at the play were so astonished at the indecency of such conduct, that she came away uncommonly agitated by behaviour she thought so affronting. Still she found the same mournful faces, and at last conjured some of them in God's name, to tell her what was the matter. One advised her, if she had any property, to secure it, for she was in danger. This alarmed her suspicions concerning the true cause, and they were confirmed by another, who answered her next question, by replying, "*il est parti*, he is gone." The famous tyrant, Le Bon, soon afterward came to Saint Omer's. Her person was seized; her property confiscated; her two children were torn from her; and

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she was ordered to prison. In the delirium of her distress, she braved this demon, called him *Scelerat*, and said, though he aimed at her life, she should live to see him cut off for his crimes. She was removed, however, to Amiens, among persons who were soon to be sacrificed, and her hair was shorn for that purpose. But at this period, Robespierre himself fell; she escaped; and, by an odd coincidence of circumstances, when Le-Bon was on his trial, she happened to come to the town where he was tried, went to the court to see the man who had done her so much mischief, and entered it (he being on his defence) at the moment he was describing the fury with which she had resisted what he called the execution of the law. She instantly mounted on a seat; shewed herself to the court; and called, in the most impressive manner, to be heard. The judge was

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proceeding to commit her for disturbing the proceedings, till she announced her name, and the court then listened to her with the utmost attention. The impression she made was so great, that Le Bon sunk dejected, and offered no further defence to that charge. She supposes him to have been a man as extraordinary for his abilities, as for his cruelty and rapaciousness. Mr. Martinet, an emigrant, came to tea. In one respect, his was a similar story. He had taught French, with great reputation, in the university of Cambridge, where he had never agitated or concerned himself with political questions, yet an information being laid against him, he was ordered out of the kingdom. In consequence of letters written by noblemen, divines, and respectable men of all parties, this order was revoked; but he is not permitted to teach in Cambridge, consequently he

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has lost an income, which he had established by his abilities, of between one and two hundred a year.

28th.—Met Sir L—— C—— at Debrett's, and spoke to him to recommend N——'s academy. Was pleased with Pulteney's speech against the Income bill. Mr. G. Dyer drank tea with us, and told me of poems well written by Lord Holland. Imitations of Juvenal, one of them called Secession, in praise of his uncle, Charles Fox. B—— asserted two people had perished by the frost in the prison, nick-named the Bastille. Sir L—— C—— agreed with me in disapproving Tierney's motion against the Editor of the Times.

29th.—Letter from Harris refusing to accept bills for me. Wrote in answer. Informed Courtney of B——'s story; he had heard it of one person starved, but with aggravating circumstances that render it incredible.

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30th.—Met Tierney coming from the park, and Tobin, jun.

31st.—Letter from Harris. Spoke to Lord Holland, requesting him to promote Mr. N——'s plan for an intended academy, which he promised to do.

1799.

JANUARY *1st.*—Lord Wycombe at Debrett's. Conversed with him yesterday on the Orleans gallery; and with Courtney on the subject of solitary confinement. Northcote present. Conversation chiefly on the perfectibility of man, Shakspeare, and painting.

2d.—Mr. Harris called, and proposes to put the comedy in rehearsal nearly as soon as it is finished. Contended with Lord H—— at Debrett's, against precedents, and in favour of the patriotism of the people; which points he did not obstinately maintain. Spoke with P—— on the subject of the

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"Lawyer." Every body speaks ill of Boaden's play, Aurelio and Miranda, first performed on Saturday, the 29th ult. at Drury Lane Theatre. Dined with Tobin in Barnard's Inn, No. 7, his brother, Mr. W——, and E——. The discourse on Christianity, causation, &c. and politics. T—— one of those who defend the present tyranny of the French Government; from the enthusiasm with which they admired the late struggles of the nation for freedom.

3*d*.—Mr. C—— brought me a hundred pounds as a loan. Seems very desirous I should not quit the kingdom. Accepted a draft for ninety pounds, at two months, drawn by Birch, for a Teniers and other pictures. Had a dispute with Weld concerning the frost of 1789 and that of 1795. I was wrong. Weld jocularly accused me of the trouble I took to have myself hanged; al-

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luding to my surrendering myself when indicted for high-treason, though my prosecutors seemed unwilling to take me into custody.

4th.—Mr. Martinet, a French emigrant, called for the first time, the gentleman mentioned on the 27th ult. Billiards with a stranger. One G—— was at play in the morning, with a youth of the name of Frazer, and played barefacedly ill, to encourage him, meaning no doubt to lead him on and plunder him.

5th.—E—— at Debrett's. He used to be stiff and distant with me, he now seems to make it a point of being familiar. A great, and not an ill talker, little depth of thought, but much florid description. Sometimes with a happy poetic word. Weld, in conversation with me, gave a high character of Lord H——, in which, I think, there was little, if any exaggeration. His speech

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to the Lords against the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, as reported by the newspapers, has great and solid merit. His delivery, I fear, is not very impressive. I likewise fear he has not sufficient vehemence of feeling to become a man of genius. G—— has again been at play with young Frazer, and to-day thought proper to win a few games. The match is to be continued on Monday.

6*th*.—After writing the last, and chief scene in my comedy, yesterday and this morning, part of it from notes, but chiefly the labour of the two days, I walked with Fanny, and Louisa Mercier, into the park, where, though it was a quick thaw, numbers were skaiting; and had the day been clear, the morning picture would have been amusing. Met General M——, had a salute; a nod from Lord R. S—— on horseback.

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7th.—Again transcribed, with additions and corrections, the last scene. Lord Holland, General Maitland, Mr. Weld, Mr. Hare, the Duke of Bedford, &c. at Debrett's. The hardships of the income bill discussed.

8th.—Wrote the first scene of the fifth act, the substance of which I had in my memory; and had the whole act transcribed, and the comedy sent to Mr. Harris. Saw P—— at Debrett's, and spoke to him of my intended Epilogue.

9th.—Harris called about three o'clock, much satisfied with the comedy, but advising some curtailments and slight alterations.

10th.—Wrote to Harris concerning the proposed alterations.

11th.—Made alterations in the Tradesman-scene, and returned the comedy to Harris, that Lewis might read Headlong before I curtail the

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Bailiff-scene in the third act. [This comedy came out at Drury Lane (much altered) in 1803, ran eleven nights, ill performed, and entitled, "Hear both Sides." June, 1808.]

12*th*. Went with Fanny and Louisa to Holman's new comedy, first time, "The Votary of Wealth," a piece in which there is much to blame, and but little to commend. Heard Mrs. Atkins in the first act of Rosina. M. Le F—— and his wife in the same box; he pretended to regret we each had visited when the other was not at home, and to wish a more intimate acquaintance, but I doubt his sincerity. He is a man of the world, and his world has not been of the purest kind.

13*th*.—Called on P——, who read me quotations made by Belsham from Davenant, something like miraculously picturing the political state and go-

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vernment of the kingdom, though written, I believe, at the beginning of this century. Left the manuscript of "the Lawyer" with him to read. Called on M. Martinet—not at home, and on Mr. Nicholson. Mr. Godwin brought my manuscript with further remarks, of the same temper and complexion as his first: on which subject, as nearly as I can recollect, we had the following conversation.—H. "The first part of your criticism, which I have read, has, I own, both pained and surprised me. When you brought your tragedy to me, you gave a minute detail of the rules I was to observe in criticising your work, that you might properly benefit by my remarks, which rules you have not yourself in the least attended to. One of the first of them was, not to find fault in such an absolute and wholesale style, as might at once kill your ardour, and make you,

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if not disgusted with your work, yet so doubtful, as at once to damp all farther progress. Yet, having read mine, you come with a sledge hammer of criticism, describe it as absolutely contemptible, tell me it must be damned, or, if it should escape, that it cannot survive five nights, that the characters and plot are but transcripts of myself, and that every body will say it is the garrulity of an old man. I am well aware that the judgment of an author, on a work of his own, which he has lately finished, is extremely fallible; but a judgment he has, and must have, and I am firmly persuaded that this comedy (meaning 'the Lawyer') contains some of the strongest writing I have ever produced, and I stake my judgment, as far as the judgment of an author, under the circumstances I have described, can be staked, that in-

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stead of being damned, it will meet with no inconsiderable applause."—G. "I thought it my duty to speak my thoughts plainly. The opinion I have delivered, I delivered coolly, after due reflection, and I was desirous you should understand perfectly what my feelings were. My language was unqualified, but there is this distinction between my critique and yours, of which I complained. I have used no triumphing banter, which you did."—H. "Not in that part of my remarks which was general; nor ever, but when I supposed it would make you more clearly perceive the defect which I wished you to amend, than any other method I could take."—G. "There is another difference between us. Though I certainly give myself credit for intellectual powers, yet I have a failing which I have never been able to over-

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come. I am so cowed and cast down by rude and unqualified assault, that for a time I am unable to recover. You, on the contrary, I consider as a man of iron."—H. "It is true, I have been so hardened in sufferance, by the difficulties I have had to overcome, that when such attacks are made upon me, I think I may say, however egotistical it may sound, I can, in the language of Shakspeare, shake them from me 'as the lion shakes the dew-drops from his mane.' Yet if you imagine that sensibility is destroyed in me, the mistake is strange and unaccountable, considering how well you know me. On the present occasion, I lay wakeful and ruminating full three hours on the injustice and wrong nature of your remarks. At length I recollected the folly of such uneasiness, created chiefly by the pain it gave me

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to think you could act so improperly, and I then recounted to myself your great virtues, and how very trifling such blemishes are, when placed in comparison with them. This, as it ought, acted like a charm, and almost immediately calmed my perturbation. But it is right I should inform you, I had this perturbation; and that though I can overcome feeling, it is still as quick and vigorous as ever." We then walked, and conversed on other subjects till dinner-time.

14*th*.—Enquired of King, auctioneer, his terms of selling books: they are ten per cent. not including ten-pence in the pound King's taxes, but all other expenses, except that of conveying them to the auction-room. Lord Wycombe at Debrett's; read to me the strange account inserted in the Times of to-day, of Lord Camelford's attempt

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to go over to France; and commented on the pretended purity of ministers, who have lately conferred the command of a ship (a frigate as I recollect) on this madman. L—— related to me a whimsical story of a physician, who one night hearing lamentable groans and cries, went to search whence they proceeded, found a man and woman, drunk, thrown out of an overturned cart, hastened to a public-house to get aid, and in his care had them put to bed together, but returning the next morning, found the man in a rage at having slept with such a companion; and the woman making an intolerable uproar, weeping, and reproaching, asserting that her character was ruined, and that he must and should marry her; which accordingly the good-natured fool was persuaded to do. Called on Christie, his terms

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for pictures are seven and a half per cent., all expenses whatever included.

15*th*.—Met Mr. P—— at Phillips's auction-rooms. Thinks highly of "the Lawyer." Suggested an alteration that should omit the Bailiff in the fourth act. Will consider it. Conversed with Lord Wycombe at Debrett's.

16*th*.—Mr. Harris called, advised alterations in "the Lawyer," which I expect will be essential. His ideas, though crude, have awakened reflection. He promised to put no other comedy in rehearsal, till he had my answer within a fortnight.

17*th*.—Made notes for altering the character of Sir Ralph. Lord Wycombe, Marquis of Townsend, Rans, &c., at Debrett's. Read the three last acts of "the Lawyer" to Louisa and Fanny; their feelings were strong, yet from their variations I could discover some

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defects. Reading such manuscripts is a good experiment.

18*th*.—Account in to-day's Morning Chronicle of the Norwegian that died at 160, enjoying his faculties to the last. His name, I think, Surrington. Ginton, a landscape designer, looked at my pictures, and praised them highly. After the Wilsons, his attention was most deeply attracted by the landscape by Artois.

19*th*.—Barry, the painter, R. A. spent the evening with us. His conversation as usual rapturous in praise of the arts. Speaks, and, I believe, thinks highly of Fanny's attempts at drawing; not of her knowledge or execution, but of her feeling for character and beauty. Saw Mr. Wheeler going to Fulham, who was astonished and rejoiced, having supposed me dead. Asked me to dine with him in the country.

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20th.—Received a begging letter from a person, signing himself J. K——, the chief features of which are ignorance and servility. I thought it my duty to refuse his request. I learn ——— intends to read lectures on law; in which political government is to be introduced, and the established systems of this country highly praised. Expressed the pain I felt, that a man of such superior powers should act so false a part, and so contrary to his convictions, of which I must, in all human probability, be able to form a tolerably accurate opinion, from the many conversations I have had with him. His judgment was (and, doubtless, still is, for his faculties are in their full vigour) so clear, his perceptions so penetrating, and his opinions so decided, that I can conceive no possibility of their being so totally changed. Read Dry-

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den's Translation, Ode 29., B. 1., of Horace; part of Macflecnoe, and his verses on young statesmen, 1680; aloud.

21*st.*—Report at Debrett's, that Paul Benfield is ruined. Was told he went out to India a carpenter, got employment as a builder, learned the art of making money breed, and came home worth 300,000*l.*

22*nd.*—The union of Ireland is now the whole subject of political discourse. Ministry seems determined, and their opponents hope, though faintly, it may put an end to their power.

23*rd.*—Met Sir F. B—— in Bond-street, who reminded me of my promise; then H——, who would not see me, ('tis the fashion of these folks to those they think their inferiors,) and afterwards C. Grey, M. P., who was less aristocratic, and gave me a nod. Lord S———'s Address in the Chro-

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nicle and Post. T—— calls him mad, I expressed a different opinion to Weld, who agreed, and said there was method in his madness.

24*th*.—Met General H—— again. He spoke to me, for it was not in Bond-street, and his pride had no alarms. Such pride is pitiable, and excites to resentment, but to resent would be equally weak.

25*th*.—At Debrett's. General H—— described the black chief of St. Domingo, Toussaint, after General Maitland. He is a little man, about fifty, toothless, lively of temper, and ambitious.

26*th*.—Call from Watts; another from Tobin, who had lent me the Sorcerer, translated from Veil Weber. He and his brother praised it as the first production in the world. I told him, I think the author a man of genius, but that his book is written in a taste

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no less disgusting than immoral, besides being deficient in several of the essential parts of composition, as, a choice of subject, conduct of the fable, probability, &c. Attwood came and told me the performers gave high applause at the reading of "the Old Clothesman." Met Knight, who is to play Florid, and who wanted to tell me it as a secret, which I refused to hear. Dibdin, comedian, and author of the Jew and the Doctor, was with him. I like him, because he spoke so earnestly in praise of the virtuous principles of his brother. They are illegitimate sons of Dibdin, the musical composer, whose conduct towards them is highly reprehensible. The young man said he had seen his father so seldom, that, having weak eyes, he should not know him if he met him in the street. I invited him to my house. The news at Debrett's was the failure in the Irish

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Parliament, of the attempt at a union; and not only there, but in the streets, it was the subject of general conversation. All whom I heard mention it, rejoiced. Naples, they say, is in the possession of the French. The king, having fled with eight thousand troops to Sicily, after twenty thousand others had laid down their arms to eight thousand French. The substance of this I suppose to be true.

28*th*.—Finished the alterations in my comedy. Debrett's full. The conduct of the Irish parliament relating to the union, the whole subject of political conversation. Read a criticism in *La Decade Philosophique*, No. 8. An. 7,—on a French translation of Hugh Trevor, containing great praise, and some pointed blame. The chief articles of the latter are,—that the plan proposed is incomplete [true], that some of the conversations are too long [true], that

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my satire on professions is unfounded [false], that I have not put my morality sufficiently in action [false again, the law part excepted], that probability is not quite enough regarded [perhaps not], and that, to make Trevor so suddenly a wealthy man is entirely in the novel style [true; blamable.]. The following are the concluding remarks: "Malgré ces défauts qu'on peut reprocher, comme nous l'avons vu, à beaucoup de romans, mêmes très-estimés, celui-ci mérite assurément d'être distingué par la justesse des observations, la vérité des tableaux et des caractères, le naturel du dialogue, la peinture exacte des mœurs et des ridicules. En un mot, c'est l'ouvrage d'un penseur, d'un homme de talent, d'un observateur habile et exercisé, d'un ami des mœurs, et de la vertu; disons encore d'un écrivain patriote, hardi défenseur des droits sacrés du

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peuple, et de telles productions sont toujours faites pour être bien accueillies."

29th.—Called on Opie; saw a portrait, whole length, of a lady, excellent. News of a second defeat of government in Ireland, 109 to 104 against the union. Pitt, in answer to Sheridan, on the debate here on that subject, said, Sheridan seemed determined to have the last word; to which Sheridan replied, he was satisfied with having the last argument. When Dundas brought the sealed bag, containing the proofs which are to be examined to shew the necessity of a union; Sheridan, seeing there was not much in it, jocularly said to Dundas, "Confess the truth, is there any thing in that bag, except the report the committee are to bring up?" H——, M. P. related these as extraordinary witticisms. The one was a ready reply; the other,

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a sarcastic question, naturally resulting from his knowledge of the practices of people in office: nothing more. Sent my comedy to Harris, with a letter. Called on Northcote.

30*th*.—Sat to Mr. Opie, first sitting for my portrait, intended for Colonel Barry. Mr. G—— has a portrait of me painted by Opie, which was exhibited last year, a most admirable painting and likeness. Received a letter from Harris. A very excellent sonnet in to-day's Herald, on Winter. General H— told me, that Burns, who has written a pamphlet on the union, cites an expression, which is become proverbial in Ireland, i. e. "Put an Irishman on the spit, and an Irishman will be found to turn it."

31*st*.—Second sitting to Opie. He related an anecdote of a man in Cornwall, who being half drunk, and near a dreadful precipice, suddenly fell, but

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happened to catch with his hands; on which he began to pray, in a confused and terrified manner, till he was so exhausted that he could hold no longer, and at last loosed his hold; but scarcely descended a yard, being not quite so far on his road as the precipice; from which, if he had fallen, he must probably have been dashed to pieces. The disappointment must have been an odd sensation. Opie knew the man.—S——, a painter, told us of his journey over Mount Cenis, when those winter winds characteristically called Tormento, by the Italians, prevailed, which will not let the snow rest till it becomes lodged in cavities, filling them up, and making one even surface, dangerous to the lives of the most experienced guides. S—— has been in India, where he was painter to the Mogul; and dignified with a Persian title, appointing him a general, and calling

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him the Royal Falcon of War, though he was in no other capacity than that of painter; but such cut-throat titles are there the only honourable distinctions, according to him, that are conferred.

FEBRUARY 1*st*. Dr. B—— and —— loud in praise of Dr. Drennan's pamphlet against Pitt. Third sitting to Opie. Called on Birch, who thinks Phillips gets better prices for pictures than Christie. Mr. and Mrs. Opie, Mr. and Mrs. Perry, Marian, Miss Barkley, daughter of Sir Robert, Northcote, and Sir F—— B——, in the evening. On the whole a pleasant party.

2nd. Fourth sitting to Opie, a short one, and only for the coat. A report at Debrett's of the massacre of the Neapolitan nobility by the Lazaroni. Conversed with Lord Wycombe on the native ferocity of the Irish. Conjectures run high, that Pitt will breed a serious civil war in that country. Read three

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acts of my comedy to S——. It is still capable, and indeed in want of great improvements.

4th.—Mr. Harris came by appointment, and we were mutually of opinion farther alterations would greatly improve the comedy. Sale of Stuart, the artist's, pictures at Phillips's rooms.

5th.—Este, Dr. Towers, Parry, jun. at Debrett's. Towers, a character worth drawing. Drank tea with P——, who wished me to mention manuscript travels written by Brown, to Robinson.

6th.—The foot walk in Hyde Park one sheet of ice, on which, not being aware, had a severe fall. No news at Debrett's. Letter from Knight to Attwood, declining to sing "The Joys of Eating, &c." in the Old Clothesman. Russian leather. Mr. Breton said the report was, that the recent death of the Duke of L—— was occasioned by poison self-administered. This is pro-

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bably as unfounded as another report, which proves to be false, that Lord C—— had lost seventy thousand pounds to the Duke of B——, and had then destroyed himself. Lord Cowper is alive, and the Duke says he never spoke to him in his life. It is true, indeed, the Duke of L—— had ruined himself by gaming, and had endeavoured to drink away the remembrance of it.

7th.—Wrote to Mr. Harris concerning Knight's song, &c. Nothing at Debrett's.

8th.—Pitt at present thought insincere for pretending to persist in the measure of a union. List of Wakefield's jury from Mr. Foulkes.

9th.—Finished my second alteration of "the Lawyer." Lord D—— at Debrett's; of opinion that the union is a dangerous affair to Pitt. The death of Mr. Rans of Moorhall, with whom

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I had some slight acquaintance, announced in the papers. Bought the Crucifixion, a Caracci, highly finished, at Phillips's, the property of Pugh, a surgeon, who gave eighty pounds, or guineas, for it. A Metzu sold for ninety-six guineas. The subject, a man on horseback, with host and hostess at an alehouse door; bought by a young man, related to Lord Fitzwilliam.

11*th.*—Sent my comedy and a letter to Mr. Harris, stating the price I required. He refused, and immediately returned the comedy. Borrowed and repaid 18*l.* 16*s.* to Mr. Robinson, and 60*l.* for a month, of Mr. S——.

12*th.*—Sat to Opie. Wrote to Mr. P——, informing him that having seen Mr. Robinson, if Mr. Brown will send his manuscript, and the price, Mr. Robinson would return an answer. Read a manuscript of Mr. Tobin, jun.

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13*th*.—Agreed with Mr. Phillips, auctioneer, to sell the whole of my effects at five per cent., including all charges, except that I am to remove books, prints, and pictures to his sale-room at my own expense. Had a second fall on the unthawed snow, by which the spinal bone is so sore I can hardly walk. Phillips, speaking of Count Kelly, characterised him as uncommonly liberal, and a great lover of the arts. Phillips sold his library, and asked permission to introduce some very indifferent books of his own, which he estimated at forty pounds. The Count disliking this, took the books at the estimate, sent them to Stockholm, had a printed catalogue of them, and sold them by auction. This was a thing totally new to the country, and drew numbers of people, some of them from a considerable distance.

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The books sold for 120*l.* and the Count remitted the money to Phillips.

14*th.*—Wrote Finale and a new song for Incledon, in the Old Clothesman. The dishonourable proceedings of Boyd and Benfield, the topic of the day. The justification of Boyd, a lame, or rather a condemning tale. Saw P——; informed him of what had passed with Harris.

15*th.*—Sat to Opie.

17*th.*—Messrs. G——, Clementi, Master Field, Mr. and Mrs. Opie, Mr. and Mrs. F—— to dinner. Field played a concerto and other things of his own composition. Is a youth of genius, for which Clementi loves, admires, and instructs him; highly to his own honour.

18*th.* The opinion that Pitt has again lost a favourable opportunity of treating with France is pretty general.

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20th. Sat to Opie. Called on Sharp, and paid him for his print of ————; which he said if I kept would become of great value, for it was the last on such a subject, meaning the destruction of war, that would ever be published. Guessing the reason of this whimsical assertion, I mentioned Brothers, of whom he talked in his usual style. The wisdom of man, he said, counteracting the wisdom of the Creator, had occasioned all our miseries: but the tongue of wisdom was now subdued, meaning Egypt, which was not only a slip of land resembling a tongue, but the place in which the learning of the world originated. Thus, by the help of a pun and a metaphor, he had double proof, which he accepts as indubitable. Syria, Palestine, and all these countries are soon to be revolutionized; and those who do not take up arms against their fellow men, are

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to meet at the Grand Millenium. The earthquake is still to happen, and the peaceable, even if uninspired, are all to be saved. So that I, being one of them, were temples to tumble over my head, should find some miraculous nail or rafter, or something else, equally wonderful, to save me from being crushed. I asked him, as I had formerly done, why the earthquake did not happen at the time positively appointed by Brothers; and he said, that unless I were one of the inspired, it was a thing he could not explain. Last summer he had retired to a lonely place near, or at Kilburn; and there he himself had been absolutely favored with a revelation, communicating to him personally, beyond all doubt, the revolutions that are immediately to happen. He is a worthy and excellent man, and in spite of this insanity, has an acute, strong, and inquiring

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mind. Notwithstanding my cross-questioning him, he has a strong desire to make a convert of me; and knowing the principles of peaceful benevolence which I hold, has no small hopes of succeeding. He was happy at the idea of having more talk on the subject, though I both plainly and ironically, in conversing with him, treated it as it deserves, except that I forbear as much as I can to wound him. He said he was greatly gratified that, though I argued against Brothers, I never called him rascally impostor, and other abusive epithets, common in the mouths of his opponents. Laughed with —— at Debrett's, at T——'s account some time ago, of the prodigious stone, or rocky fragment, that was rained on his estate. —— said, T—— was only half mad, and that vanity was the possessing demon.

21*st*.—Sat to Opie. Lord Wycombe

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brought the report to Debrett's of the loss of the Proserpine frigate, with Mr. Grenville, his suite, and the whole crew. Sent Mrs. —— a one pound note, as a present relief.

22*d.*—Argued at Debrett's against the immorality of invective, for which I consider Mr. Wakefield as very blamable. Received a note from Mr. ——, asking in the name of a friend to admit some pictures in my sale, which I refused, as a public deception, and for other reasons.

25*th.*—Met R. A——, who walked with me up Bond-Street. Disbelieves the loss of Grenville. Fox still determined on retirement. Tobin called, and inquired my thoughts on his brother's manuscript, which I gave him.

26*th.*—Sent the following notice to the Commissioners for the Income Bill. "I have no income; that is, I have neither landed nor personal property,

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that brings me either rent or interest. My income has always been the produce of my labour; and that produce has been so reduced, by the animosity of party spirit, that I find myself obliged to sell my effects for the payment of my debts, that I may leave the kingdom till party spirit shall subside."

27*th*.—Sat to Mr. Opie.

28*th*.—Sat to Opie. Sir L—— C—— at Debrett's, glad to see me; a man of unaffected manners, no pride, or as little perhaps as a man of wealth and title can have, and with patriotic and benevolent intentions. Lord Wycombe walked with me down Piccadilly, to inquire after my picture of Angelica and Medoro.

MARCH 1*st*.—Sat to Opie. Northcote there, who warmly praised his whole length of Mrs. Price, and his Old Soldier, and Girl with Beer. Phillips came,

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read the catalogue, and approved my lotting of the pictures. Called and saw his Wouvermans' Hawking. Parry, jun., is given to hope for a verdict in his favour, by Erskine.

2nd.—Sat to Mr. Opie. Aided to catalogue the German books.

3rd.—Louisa and Theresa to breakfast. Spyring to tea. Informed Col. Barry of the business of to-morrow; viz. my marriage with Louisa, and received his hearty congratulations. He had seen my portrait, was highly pleased, and gave Opie a draft on his banker.

5th.—Went after breakfast at ten, and sat to Mr. Drummond, Carlisle-street, Soho, at the request of the proprietors of the Monthly Mirror. Taken in crayons, size of life. A call from P——; he told me they (meaning his friend, Mr. Brown, and himself), had closed with Cadell for a thousand gui-

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neas, that is, had sold the copyright of Brown's travels into Egypt, Darfoor, &c. for that sum.

6*th.*—Went a second time and sat to Drummond.

8*th.*—Called on Opie; but the morning so clouded after a fall of snow, that it was too dark for him to paint, in the present almost finished state of my portrait.

9*th.*—Sat to Opie. A snowy and very bad day for the picture sale. Difficulties made by ———, the auctioneer, concerning the prices marked by me, though he had himself required I should mark them. Thirty-seven lots of my pictures bought in.

10*th.*—Mrs. Holcroft visited by Mrs. and Miss B——, Mr. and Mrs. P——, and by Mr. and Mrs. Opie in the evening. Mr. Brown, the traveller, called.

12*th.*—Walked with Louisa in search

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of lodgings. Mr. B—— to dinner, and accompanied me, Sophia, and Louisa to the theatre Drury-lane. The Secret, and Feudal Times, both of them very dull and indifferent."

END OF DIARY.

CHAP. II.

Mr. Holcroft soon after went abroad. On his arrival at Hamburgh, he went to lodge at the house of his daughter and her husband, Mr. Cole, who was settled there in trade. He afterwards went to reside at the house of ——, where he paid five pounds a week; and as his remittances from England were often interrupted, he would have been reduced to great distress, had it not been for the generous exertions of a stranger, a Mr.

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Schuckmacher. This gentleman, who was a merchant, advanced 250*l.* to Mr. Holcroft, on his note of hand. The first literary attempt which Mr. Holcroft made after he was settled on the continent failed. This was to set up a journal, (the European Repository) containing an account of the state of foreign literature, and anecdotes of celebrated characters. It only reached the second number.

It is certain that Mr. Holcroft's introductions, and his connexions with literary men abroad, would have afforded every opportunity for executing such a work well, had it met with encouragement. While at Hamburgh, he visited Klopstock, Voss, Sander, &c. &c. On his first introduction to Klopstock, the latter laboured to shew the superiority of the German to every other language in conciseness; and

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challenged Mr. Holcroft to translate with equal conciseness into English. To which he replied, that Klopstock might be easily supposed to overcome Holcroft, but that the English language ought not to suffer on that account. He told Mr. Holcroft a story of Voss, the celebrated classic; that at a time when he was too ill even to hear a scholar read and parse a few lines in the classics, familiar as they were to him, he was still able and desirous to continue his translation of Ovid in Hexameters, and found relief from this laborious task. When Baron Stolberg (the superintendant of the academy) came to visit him, he hid his papers, lest he should be accused of neglect of duty, or blamed for disregarding his health. Sander, a Dane by birth, informed Mr. Holcroft that the Road to Ruin, and the Deserted Daughter, had

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been translated into the Danish language, and that the latter had been the most popular of the pieces brought out the preceding winter at Copenhagen.

The admiration of the Germans for English literature, and their contempt for the French, are well known. Moliere is the only man among the latter, to whom they allow much genius. Their notions of excellence are indeed rather hypercritical than commonplace. They seem in general to assign the highest stations to the greatest men, but their list of great men is short. There are only four whom they consider as *poets*, that is to say, inventors of a new style, namely, Homer, Dante, Shakspeare, and Goethe. Why the last should have this high rank assigned him, I do not know. He is placed by the Germans themselves far above

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Schiller. Mr. Holcroft while abroad, translated his poem of Herman and Dorothea. A note from the author to the translator on this subject, will be found among the letters at the end of the volume.—Mr. Holcroft also, while he was at Hamburgh, finished and sent over the comedy of "Hear both Sides," and his translation of "Deaf and Dumb," which were afterwards acted with success, at Drury-Lane.

On his departure from England, he had renounced all idea of picture-dealing, and connoisseurship. He however attended several picture-sales, but without attempting to bid. One day as he was strolling along the street, his attention was caught by a small picture, which lay among some lumber at a broker's shop. He went in, asked the price of it, and was answered three guineas. Mr. Holcroft made no bar-

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gain, but determined to go home, and get Mrs. Holcroft to come and look at it, to see whether any one else must not be as much struck with it as he was. On re-examining the picture, his confidence in its being an original increased, and he paid the money for it. As he was returning home in triumph with the picture under his arm, he met Mercier, (Mrs. Holcroft's father) who had himself been a dabbler in pictures, and who, laughing, exclaimed, "A ce trait je connois mon sang."

The first step being got over, they consulted together, how to turn this accident to advantage; they henceforward frequented auction-rooms, and ransacked brokers' shops, to make mutual discoveries of original pictures, which might be had for a song. Mr. Holcroft, in this manner, laid out between four and five hundred pounds,

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by which he expected to clear at least double the sum.

In this expectation he was once more wretchedly disappointed. Not that the pictures were in themselves bad, they were many of them excellent, and in general by the masters to whom they were attributed; but they were not the finest specimens of those masters, and with respect to second-rate pictures, it requires either an acquaintance with the particular master who happens to be in vogue for the time, or regular connexions with other picture-dealers, to secure the purchaser against loss. The pictures which Mr. Holcroft sent over to England, were fifty-seven in number. They were entrusted to the care of Mr. Godwin. He prevailed on some professional friends, to go and look at them, who thought they would hardly sell

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for the amount of the custom-house-duties, which were a hundred-and-fifty pounds. A few of them were however brought away, and left in the care of Mr. Opie. The following friendly letter to Mr. Holcroft, was written on this subject.

"*December 5*, 1799.

"I am quite ashamed that your letter should have remained so long unnoticed; but being at Norwich when it arrived, I thought it better to wait till I came to town, and had seen the pictures mentioned in it, that I might at the same time I answered it, give you some account of them.

"The pictures I found, through the care of Mr. Gillies, safely lodged in my house on my return to town, which was only three days ago. With the sketch by Rubens, I am quite charmed; it is really a most exquisite thing.

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The portrait is a good one; but is not the likeness of Lord Stratford, nor painted by Vandyke. The other two are not at first view so much to my taste, nor am I convinced they were painted by the master to whom you attribute them; but I cannot speak decisively, till I have examined them with more attention. Care shall be taken of all, but the Rubens I have mounted into my painting room, as it contains a great deal worth studying.

"You will do great injustice to the sentiments of esteem and friendship, which both Mrs. Opie and myself feel for you, if you do not rest assured that to hear of your health and welfare, will at all times give us pleasure; and we have only to beg that in your next, you will make no other use of your *bridle*, than to lay its reins on the neck of your affection, in the utmost confi-

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dence, that all that comes from you, will be received with a most hearty welcome.

"I am, with the highest esteem,

"Yours most sincerely,

"J. OPIE."

These pictures were all of them afterwards redeemed from the custom-house; and with those which Mr. Holcroft had bought in at his first sale, and other purchases he made on the continent, sold for near 700*l*.

While at Hamburgh, Mr. Holcroft met with one of those alarming accidents, of which, in the course of his life, a more than usual number fell to his share. He had been recommended to bathe his feet in hot water, and mix a certain quantity of aquafortis in the bath. As he was pouring the aquafortis into the tub, the steam of the water caused the bottle, which was of very thin glass, to burst; the aqua-

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fortis flew up to his face, burned his wrists to the bone; but luckily his spectacles saved his eyes. The state he was in was dreadful, yet not a single complaint escaped him. "Thank God," he exclaimed to his terrified wife, who just before the accident had wished to pour the aquafortis in, but was prevented from doing so, "You and the child (whom she held in her arms) are safe!" His daughters, who were undressing in the next room, alarmed by the shrieks of Mrs. Holcroft, rushed into the apartment, which was filled with steam; and the distraction of the youngest at seeing the condition her father was in, deprived her of all presence of mind. "For Heaven's sake, Fanny," said her father, "calm yourself; and do you, Sophy, listen to what I say. Let Dr. Maclean be immediately fetched: he lives in such a street. Your violent grief, my dear

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girls, instead of good, does harm. Be collected, and act like rational beings." It was more than two hours before he was attended by his friend, Dr. Maclean. Till he arrived, Mr. Holcroft supposed himself deprived of sight; and the joy which the assurance that he was not blind excited may be easily imagined. During a long and painful confinement, he was perfectly cheerful, and his mind always employed and active.

Two years before this accident, Mr. Holcroft was so dangerously ill as to be given over by his physicians: and at that time his fortitude and presence of mind saved his life. One night the spasms, to which he was subject, were so violent, that he felt, if they continued, he could not live. Dr. Pitcairn had advised him to take a very small quantity of laudanum, beginning with

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five drops, which he might increase to fifteen or twenty at the utmost, should the pain become worse. Finding the pain grow more and more violent, he desired his amanuensis who attended him, to give him fifteen, then twenty drops at a time. This he took to the amount of 140 in the course of the night. Mr. Ralph expostulated, and said he was afraid to give them; but Mr. Holcroft insisted—"If these pains continue," said he, "it is impossible I should live, and I can but die." This bold but dangerous experiment succeeded.

Mr. Holcroft's stay at Hamburgh lasted above a year. He had some difficulty in procuring a passport to Paris from the French minister at the Hague, (as we were then at war with France), but on a second application he succeeded. He had also met with some

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impediment in obtaining one from Mr. Frere, before he went abroad. While he was at Hamburgh, a paragraph appeared in one of our morning papers, directly charging him with being a spy of the French government. To this paragraph he condescended to make a public answer.

Mr. Holcroft remained above two years at Paris. While here, he seems to have been chiefly occupied in collecting materials for the large work on the manners, &c. of this capital, which he published after his return, in 1804. Of this work (Travels into France, &c.) it is only just to say, that it is one of the most interesting and instructive books of travels in the language. Its fault perhaps is, that it bears too hard on the foibles of the French, which Mr. Holcroft seems to have regarded too much with the eye of an English-

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man. Their own self-sufficiency, it is true, is enough to provoke and justify considerable severity of criticism. With respect to the question itself of the difference between the two nations, all that can be said upon it, I think, amounts only to this, that the one has too much gravity, and the other too much levity. Our gravity frequently degenerates into phlegm, coldness, reserve, pride, obstinacy, and sullenness; as their constitutional levity is productive of frivolity, pertness, unmeaning loquacity, self-conceit, fickleness, and indifference to good or evil. The feelings of the French are more quick and lively; those of the English more deep and permanent: again, their apprehensions have more facility and nicety of observation; our own countrymen have shewn greater strength and comprehension of mind. France has, I am

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persuaded, produced more clever men than England; but that she has produced more great men than England, cannot be pretended. The mind of a Frenchman is, in general, more easily moved, and by slighter causes; an Englishman's feelings are, for the very reason that they require a greater momentum to bring them out, more steady and more strong. I do not here inquire into the superiority of the French or English character. I only state what I conceive to be the difference with a view to those among the French, who, setting up an exclusive claim to certain qualities, will not allow others the superiority in things which are totally distinct, and who are ready to grasp all excellence, however incompatible, to themselves. Those who wish to be furnished with facts illustrative of the peculiar manners and cha-

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racter of the French, will find ample materials for this purpose, accompanied with refined and discriminating reflections, in the Travels of our author.

I shall insert only two examples, which may shew the pointed felicity with which Mr. Holcroft has selected his traits of national character. "My wife," says Mr. Holcroft, "was one day buying some fish; and while she was undetermined, the girl said to her—'*Prenez cela, car votre mari est un brave homme.*' My wife replied,—'*Oui, cela se peut bien; mais comment savez-vous qu'il est un brave homme?*' '*C'est égal,*' answered the girl, '*cela fait plaisir à entendre.*' This girl's maxim is sound morality wherever I have been in France." The difference between words and things is certainly less marked in France than in England: how far this is an advantage or

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a disadvantage, I do not, for my own part, pretend to decide.

The other story is highly honourable to, as well as characteristic of the French. Their humanity, whatever else we may think of it, costs them less than it does the English.

" A poor musician, who usually brought a small pianoforte in the afternoon to the *Champs Elysées*, and played, that those who were pleased might reward him by a trifle, having played in vain one evening, was sorrowfully retiring home. He was seen by Elleviou, (a famous actor) remarked, and questioned. The poverty and ill success of the wandering musician moved the pity of the actor, who desired the instrument might again be put down; and stepping aside, he said he would return instantly. His wife and friend had passed on, and he brought them back. It was nearly

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dark. Pradere, his friend, sat down to the pianoforte, and accompanied Elleviou, who began to sing, to the astonishment of numbers that were soon assembled. The men had drawn the hat over the brow: Madame Elleviou put down her veil, and went round to collect; the pleasingness of her manner, the little thankful curtsies she dropt to all who gave, the whiteness of her hand, and the extraordinary music they heard, rendered the audience so liberal, that she made several *tours*, and none ineffectually. Elleviou, however, could not long remain unknown; and finding themselves discovered, Madame Elleviou gave all, and it was supposed, more than all, she had collected from the crowd, to the poor musician: the sum amounted to thirty shillings; and among the pence and halfpence there were crown pieces, which no doubt were given by the actors. The

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feelings of the scene as the audience dispersed, are not easily to be described. The unexpected relief, afforded to the man who was departing so disconsolate, was great indeed: but it was forgotten in the charming behaviour of those who relieved him, in their almost divine music, and in the strangeness of the adventure. The surrounding people were scarcely less moved; so kind an act from a man in such high public estimation, excited more than admiration; and the tears of gratitude, shed by the musician, drew sympathizing drops from many of the spectators. This event gave birth to two new musical pieces, which were both successful."

This was certainly an action of which an Englishman is incapable, but to which every Englishman will give his warmest tribute of applause. When people dispute and cavil about one

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another's actions, it is only because there is something wrong or absurd on both sides.

The Travels through France, &c. were published by Phillips, and Mr. Holcroft received 1500*l.* for the copy-right.

After Mr. Holcroft's return from the Continent, in the summer of 1803, almost the first undertaking in which he embarked was the establishment of a printing-house, in connexion with his brother-in-law, Mercier. Mr. Holcroft found unexpected difficulties in this business, owing to the want of sufficient capital to carry it on. Meeting also with many heavy losses in publications which he undertook to print on his own account, he found himself under the necessity, in order to satisfy the pressing demands of his creditors, to dispose of the printing-office, having previously obtained his partner's consent to do so.

Mr. Holcroft brought out six dra-

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matic pieces while he was abroad, or after his return to England: Deaf and Dumb, The Escapes, Hear both Sides, a Tale of Mystery, the Lady of the Rock, and lastly, The Vindictive Man. All of them, except the last, were successful.

Those which became the greatest favourites with the public, were, Deaf and Dumb, and the Tale of Mystery, a melo-drama. Both of these are certainly exquisite in their kind, but of the first it is not too much to say, that it is one of the most beautiful and affecting stories that ever was exhibited on any stage. It is taken from the French play of M. Bouilly, which was itself founded on an incident in the life of the famous Abbe de l'Epée, instructor of the Deaf and Dumb.

Julio, the heir of the lord of Harancour, who is born deaf and dumb, is left an orphan, when he is only eight

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years old; and the helplessness of his situation suggesting the possibility of getting rid of him, he is taken from Thoulouse to Paris by his guardian and maternal uncle, assisted by a servant in the family, and there lost in the streets at night. Dupre, the accomplice of his uncle Darlemont, swears to his death; and at their return home, Darlemont is invested with the estates and honours of the house of Harancour. Meantime, poor Julio is found in the streets of Paris in a coarse dress, which does not denote him to be any thing but a beggar; and it being discovered that he is deaf and dumb, he is taken to the asylum of the Abbe de l'Epée for children who are born with this defect. The melancholy observed in his countenance and manner, the delicacy of his complexion, and other circumstances, soon lead to a suspicion that he is the child of rich parents, and has

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been purposely lost by some person who wished to usurp his rights. He is taught the use of artificial signs, and learns to read and write. One day being with De l'Epée, when a judge is passing by dressed in his full robes, Julio is violently agitated, and makes signs to his instructor, that his father used to be dressed in this manner. Another time, passing through the Barriere d'Enfer, the recollection suddenly struck him that this was the very gate through which he entered Paris. This produced a conviction in the mind of L'Epée that he came fr om some city in the south of France, of which in all likelihood his father had been chief magistrate. Yet how to proceed in his behalf? The youth had never heard his father's name, he did not know his family, or the place of his birth. After some ineffectual researches, De l'Epée resolves at last to

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take his pupil with him, and traverse in person and on foot the whole of the south of France. They embrace each other, invoke the protection of heaven, and set forward. After a journey, long, fatiguing, hopeless, they at length arrive at the gates of Thoulouse. Julio knows the place, seizes his benefactor's hand, and uttering wild cries of joy, leads him quickly, here and there, through various quarters of the city. At last they come to the square in which the palace of Harancour stood; he stops, points to the mansion, shrieks, and falls senseless into the arms of L'Epée. This is the foundation of the story, the rest may be easily divined by the reader.—The Vindictive Man was the last, and certainly not the best of Mr. Holcroft's dramatic productions. It was condemned at Drury-lane. From the state of his circumstances at the time, this failure

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was felt as a severe blow, by the author. With what feelings he bore it, may be learned from a short, but beautiful dedication of the play to Miss Holcroft.

"TO MY DAUGHTER FANNY.

"To you, my dear, I inscribe this comedy, because you approved, nay, was partial enough to admire the scenes, progressively, as they were written, and the play, when it became a whole. I inscribe it to you, because you have dedicated your talents, by your literary efforts, to the cause of morality, and have need of that patient resignation to which every writer is doomed. I inscribe it to you, and in this sense to my whole family, with sympathetic tenderness, as a solitary testimony of true and ardent affection: as such, I am well persuaded you will all receive it, though it has been pub-

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licly condemned. You will remember the giver; and the gift, though barren, will be welcome."

Besides the plays which have been enumerated, Mr. Holcroft, after his return to England, published "the Theatrical Recorder," in two volumes, a small volume of Poems, called "Tales in Verse," and the novel of "Brian Perdue."

Mr. Holcroft, at the time of the failure of his last play, had several dramatic, as well as other manuscripts in hand, which, had he been allowed to finish them, would have easily relieved him from his temporary embarrassments. He had however a young and increasing family to maintain; and the ill health, with which he had long struggled, now encreased fast upon him, and rendered all his efforts vain.

Mr. Holcroft had, for nearly a year,

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been so much troubled with an asthma, as to render walking difficult to him. He was not, however, confined to his house till about half a year before his death. His disorder was violent spasms, accompanied with spitting of blood, and an enlargement of the heart, occasioned, as was supposed, by continual anxiety. It was during the two last months of his illness, when he could no longer rise from his bed, and when every effort to speak was almost convulsive, that he dictated the account of his own life, which has been inserted in the beginning of these volumes. Let it remain a proof of the energy of his character, and of that superiority of the mind over the body, which was one of his strongest sentiments. Through the whole time he discovered a fortitude in suffering, which has rarely been equalled: nor did he till the very last relinquish the hopes of

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recovering. If any thing could exceed the patient courage with which he passed through this trying scene, it was the affectionate, unwearied assiduity with which Mrs. Holcroft attended him night and day, through the whole. For the last six weeks, she scarcely once quitted his bed-side for a quarter of an hour together. The task was one, to which duty and affection were alone equal. In any other circumstances, her strength would have failed under such exertions: but Mr. Holcroft was not satisfied unless she was with him, and that consideration prevailed over every other. Colonel Harwood, his son-in-law, was with him from the Sunday evening before he died; on which day, his physicians, Dr. Buchan and Dr. Hooper, had given him over. Many of the following particulars are taken from Colonel Harwood's account.

There was not the shortest interval

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in which he was not in complete possession of himself. The only slight indication to the contrary was that he once said to the Colonel, "I have great difficulty sometimes in rousing my mind; therefore, if at any time I stop in speaking to you, do you remember my last word, and join it to the next that I shall afterwards say to you." This however rather implied his strong efforts to preserve his intellects, than the failure of them. His stopping at any time in the midst of a sentence appeared to be always owing to the difficulty of articulation, rather than the loss of memory. When he was so far gone, that it was difficult to understand him, he desired those who were with him to repeat his words, that he might be sure they were heard, and then nodded assent.

On Sunday he expressed a wish to see Mr. Godwin, but when he came, his feelings were overpowered. He

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could not converse, and only pressed his hand to his bosom, and said, "My dear, dear friend!" On Monday, he again wished to see Godwin, and all his friends that could be sent to: but he had not strength sufficient to hold a conversation: he could only take an affectionate leave, and then he said, he had nothing more to do in this world. He afterwards frequently spoke, or moved his lips, as taking a most affectionate leave. A little before he died, he called for wine, and refused it from every hand that held it to him, till his eldest daughter took it into hers, he then bowed his head to her, and drank it; thus, in some way or other, shewing signs of regard to all, till his last moments approached. Hearing a noise of children on the stairs, he said to his wife, "Are those *your* children, Louisa?" as if he was already disengaged from human ties. On Thursday

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night, about half past eleven, he seemed in great pain, and said to Mrs. Holcroft, "*How tedious*, My affections are strong." It was thought from this that it would be a relief to his feelings, that they should retire: they all went into the next room, Colonel Harwood still keeping his eye upon him; but seeing his struggles increase, and being desirous to spare his wife and daughter a sight they could not have borne, he returned into the bed-room, and gradually shut and fastened the doors, which Mr. Holcroft observing, shewed evident signs of satisfaction. And seeming then easier, he smiled, and fixing his eyes on his friend, took them no more from him, till they were closed for ever.—Thus died a great and good man, who shewed in the last and most trying scene of all the same firmness of mind, and warmth of affection, which had distinguished him through life.

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Mr Holcroft died on Thursday, the 23rd of March, 1809, at the age of 63.

The following is the report which Dr. A. P. Buchan, and Mr. A. Carlisle, favoured Colonel Harwood with, who also attended the examination.

"*London, March 24th,* 1809.

"*Statement of the Anatomical Inspection of Mr. Thomas Holcroft, aged* 63.

"The examination took place twenty-four hours after decease. The body was considerably emaciated, and slightly anasarcous throughout. An extensive cicatrix at the upper part of the sternum, and at the junction of the neck with the breast, indicated some long continued chronic abscesses. The cavity of the abdomen contained about a pint of dropsical water. The stomach, intestines, mesenteric glands, kidneys, and bladder, were free from diseased structure. The liver was about twice

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the natural bulk, hard and tuberculated on its surfaces. The peritoneal covering of this viscous substance was marked by numerous opake spots, where the membrane was drawn into folds, and this appearance seemed to characterize a series of inflammations. The interior texture of the liver was tuberculated. The gall-bladder was much distended. The outer surface of the spleen had much of the appearance displayed by the liver. The cavities of the thorax contained about two quarts of dropsical water. The lungs were soft, and their air-cells free. The heart was large, and bore the relaxed character which often occurs after a long-continued laborious circulation. The coronary arteries had begun to ossify. The arch of the aorta was dilated, approaching to aneurism, and the texture of its coats had become hard and inelastic. The descending aorta and the primary iliac

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arteries had become completely ossified in several parts, and were unduly dilated. From the facts here adduced, it may be considered, that the diseased structure of the liver, and of the heart, and its principal arteries, led to the dropsy of the chest, which might be the immediate cause of death, although in a frame so disorganized, life could not have been much longer protracted. Whether the disease of the liver preceded that of the heart and its vessels, or the contrary, and whether they were distinct diseases, and which of these led most decidedly to the fatal event, are subjects for uncertain speculation."

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LETTERS

TO AND FROM THE AUTHOR.

LETTER I.

To a Friend. 1799.

YOU, and many other of my friends, were informed of my motives for quitting my native country, and residing some few years abroad: till more peaceable times should again render that country to me what it once was; admirable for its general industry, manners, and morality; and undisturbed by the suspicions and persecutions, with which other countries were, and too often still continue to be, afflicted. Nothing but the strange terror which had seized the

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public mind could have engendered that spirit of individual rancour so foreign to the English character, which suddenly spread through the nation; and nothing but the stupor of mind, under such an impulse, could have made me suspected as one of the heads of the abominable Hydra, to extirpate which every Englishman was summoned. The fear was itself ridiculous: but, in their consequences, such fears have been fatal to many a worthy man.

I cannot recollect these things unmoved: neither can I hear various false reports of my being obliged to quit England, and of my not being suffered to return, without wishing that those who give them credit may be undeceived. My departure from England was voluntary; as is my absence. I cannot live in danger from Laws which I have not violated, or power with which I do not contend. I carefully

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shun the acrimony of political dispute, and the circles in which it is indulged. To the utmost of the little ability I have, it is my desire to inform, with the hopes of benefiting mankind; and this end cannot be attained by making them angry. In action, heart, and principle, I am, or would become, the friend of man. The only enemy I encounter is error; and that with no weapon but words: my constant theme has been, let it be taught, not whipped.

The letters I mean to address to you are intended for the public; and of these facts I wish the public to be informed and reminded. You must not, therefore, be surprised that I speak of them in this place. Whatever fable may invent, or credulity believe, I pledge my veracity to the world, that what I have above said is literally true: and may the world treat my memory

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with that ignominy, which a falsehood so solemn and gratuitous would deserve, if I prevaricate.

Avoiding the pursuit of this painful subject, the busy memory recurs to another, equally ungrateful: I did not quit the circle of friends, in whose intercourse I found so much benefit, and took so much delight, but with the bitterness of regret. I could not sit in apathy; and see the few effects I had collected become the scattered prey of brokers and dealers; and chiefly my library, on which so much of my money and time had been bestowed, squandered, twenty and more books in a lot: several of them individually of greater worth than the price paid for the whole. It seemed the dissolution of my social life; and something like the entrance into a wild and savage state. What multitudes of such thoughts did my afflicted heart suffer without

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giving them utterance! It would but have communicated and increased affliction.

I wish not to dwell on these dark parts of the picture. Who quits the country of his fathers without a sigh? Yet, who journeys forward to lands unexplored without hopes of strange and unexpected pleasures? It is a season full of apprehensive emotions, flutterings of the heart, and hopes and fears too numerous to be defined. At least it is such to those to whom travelling is not become a habit.

Some people have asked, why are books of travels so much read? It is because they are so often entertaining. Customs, when they differ but little from our own, seldom fail to excite our surprise, our laughter, or our contempt. Without crossing the seas, a man who has the faculty of noticing the remarkable, the whimsical, and the absurd,

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in his daily walks at home, never fails to entertain, if he think proper to narrate and to comment; and the traveller who wants this faculty of observation journeys to little purpose, and is heard with little pleasure. He sometimes even endeavours to falsify the true reports of his predecessors; and to offer the dulness of his discernment as a proof of his impartiality. Thus much by way of introduction.

LETTER II.

LET us begin our journey; and whet your imagination to fill up the narrative.

We were sufficient in number to occupy a small cabin; and various reasons determined us to sail down the river, instead of posting by land to

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Yarmouth. Wind and weather out of the question, he that depends on the word of a captain, for the day that his vessel will be ready to sail, will be deceived ninety-nine times in a hundred: a week of additional latitude is often too little. Not thoroughly aware of this, we left the polite parish of Mary-le-bone, and removed to the purlieus of London-Bridge. How many thanks are due to our worthy and liberal friend, G——, for the many invitations he gave us to his table, and the pleasant urbanity with which we were there treated. But these, you well know, are not the only acts of kindness for which we are indebted to this free-hearted, worthy man.

About two days before we went on board, a sudden difficulty seemed to start. We were told we should be stopped at Gravesend, if we had not a passport. This seemed incredible: we

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inquired, and some affirmed, and others denied the necessity of such a document. Could an Englishman want a passport, to go wherever his business or his pleasure might invite him, within the British domains, or to a neutral state? By many the idea was scouted, and as it proved, justly. Yet others were so positive in affirming the reverse, that I thought it prudent, for full security, to go to Gravesend, and inquire.

It happened to be at the hour when the tide served, and the common passage-boats were ready to sail; and, as this was a cheap, an expeditious, and to me a novel conveyance, it was in every sense acceptable. Those who have made the experiment, know with what solicitations they have been invited to step on board first one boat and then another. On this occasion, it happened that the Queen Charlotte,

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and the Prince of Wales, were rivals: but, as I was first harangued by the orator of the Charlotte, and had no other preponderating motive, the right seemed to be in her; and I was escorted, with great eagerness and civility, to my seat.

I had heard so much of Gravesend passengers, and the peculiar rhetoric in which they indulge, that I thought it probable they would detect something ridiculous in the cut of my coat, the colour of my hair, or some other feature or appurtenance about me. I was not deceived. The shortsightedness that obliges me to wear spectacles, has often subjected me to the derision of the working community; who never suspect there can be a rational motive for walking the streets with what they generally regard as a badge of supreme folly. I had not taken my place five seconds, before I saw the

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leer and the wink go round. The weather being fine, every body was on deck; and the assumed gravity of my look, at first checked risibility. But the pause was short. An impudent fellow opposite to me, looking in my face, said—"The next time I go to court, I will get a saddle for my nose; because I see it is all the go."—"You had better get a handle to your hat," said the man at the helm, whose invitation to come on board I had followed; and who therefore, I suppose, thought proper to be my champion. My assailant knew his man; and, without noticing this retort continued. —"I'll ask my granny to leave me her barnacles. Pray, Sir, how many candles may you see in the dark, when only one is lighted?" "How many fools did you meet, when you last dipt your paté in a pail of water? Who gave you that coarse net-work, to co-

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ver your face? Why did not you ask your wife to wash it before you came out?" [The man was scarred with pock-marks, and the river tar continued.] "You're a pretty fellow to hoist the slang-flag! Where did you learn gull shooting? you are an apt scholar! You could eat a giblet-pye before you could spell goose *****." Enough of these vulgar but merry kind of combats. Would that the well-bred duellist were as harmless!

I believe it was here I first remarked one of the many superstitious habits of seamen; that of whistling for a wind. I find it is common to them all; from the captain to the cabin-boy. The day was more calm than either the passengers, or the boat-men wished; and, to beguile the time, a man sang the beautiful ballad of Black-Eyed Susan. Having ended, another told us a

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tragical tale, which the song no doubt had brought to memory.

The mate of a ship had a sweetheart; who came on board the evening he was to sail. She was a pretty girl, and deeply affected. Her love was strong, or rather violent. Having drawn him aside, she told him, if they parted, she was certain they should never meet again; and that she had not the power to leave the ship. He remonstrated on the impossibility of her stay; but she could listen to nothing but her passion, fears, and forebodings. She wept, intreated, went on her knees; and, if he would but consent, said she would hide herself in the forecastle, till the ship should be under way. The mate, who could not comply, at length reproved and left her in anger; while she threatened her own destruction. He went below; and, not seeing her when he

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returned on deck, he concluded she was gone. Alas! the poor agitated, and despairing creature, had thrown herself over-board. She had done it unseen; and the mate, immediately afterward perceiving that the boat in which she came was waiting, began to inquire: but no one knew what was become of her. He recollected her proposition to hide herself, and went in search: certain, as he supposed, she had made the attempt. She was no where to be found: his alarm increased; his cheeks became pale. One man said "he had heard something fall into the water; and to be sure it must be she. Who knew but she might have been thrown over-board?" Suspicions arose: the pallid hue and wild terror of the poor mate, gave them strength: he was taken into custody, tried for the supposed murder, and in great danger of suffering death; so

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strong did the circumstances against him appear to be, in the opinion of his judges. One witness, however, was very clear in his testimony, that he saw the mate go under hatches, and leave the deceased on the deck; that he likewise saw him return; and that it was during this interval, the accident must have happened: for that he and others had accompanied the mate in his search to find her. Thus the positive and accurate evidence of this witness, saved his shipmate from an ignominious death.

The life of a man, in a court of law, depends upon a breath. Remember it, you who sit in judgment on the lives of your fellow creatures!

Another told us how his cabin-boy (he was himself a sea-captain) jumped over-board in a rough sea, to recover a mop; which he had accidentally let fall. He succeeded; but it was at the

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risk of his life. "I asked him," said the captain, "how he came to do such a thing? and the little hell-spawn told me, 'he was afraid I should *give him the cat;* if the mop had been lost.'— I'll give it you to some tune, lubber, said I, if you do such a thing again."— So much for a captain's humanity. This is no bad instance of the general despotism exercised on board of ships.

Fine writing will object to the coarseness of phraseology in this letter; and, under other circumstances, I would not give fine writing such cause of complaint: but, were it changed in this place, we should no longer be in company with sea-captains and passengers from Billingsgate in a Gravesend boat.

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LETTER III.

We parted during a calm, in my last; but remember we are not yet at Gravesend. In wit, vulgar or refined, puns are more frequent agents than wits generally suppose. Hearing a child cry in a woman's arms, a sailor exclaimed—"So! We have a squall: we shall soon have a breeze."—"Yes," replied a second, "I hope another hand will be put to the bellows."

It so happened that the punster was a prophet. The sails swelled; and the steersman told us "we could not have a better wind, if we had bought one." To which another added—"he wished he could find the way to the weather-office."

I doubt if there be a nation existing more skilful and alert, on the water,

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than the English. The Thames in particular, has vessels so numerous, and of such various kinds, riding and traversing its waves in such endless directions, that the unaccustomed eye is confused in its attempts to distinguish and individualize the moving multitude. Ships, snows, brigs, sloops, cutters, barges, lighters, boats, vessels of every form and size, and from all regions of the Earth! My heart beat, while I watched the dexterity with which they mutually shunned the shocks, that at every returning moment, threatened each other with oversetting. Of this we were once in danger. The steersman of a heavy barge, had his attention called away, perhaps not three-seconds, from his duty; and it was with the utmost exertion, and presence of mind, that the active fellows on board the Charlotte kept her from running foul of the barge. The danger

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past, they were enraged; and began to rate the barge-man: who, angry with and ashamed of himself, bade them in a surly tone "mind their own business." "You don't mind yours," aptly retorted one of them. "I'll be damned if you are he that set the Thames on fire."

I was not a little amused by an itinerant bookseller, one of the passengers; who opened his pocket, and spread his wares upon deck: and, to astonish and invite customers, among other things, exhibited a small quarto, on botany, with coloured plates; which, he told us, was for a *surprising* learned gentleman, at West Thurrock. (Apropos of Thurrock. All book-men are addicted to etymology. Pray was this the rock of the gothic god, Thor?) Among his literary treasures was a sixpenny description of the passage, by water, from London to Gravesend; by the erudite Bibliopole Pocock, of the

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latter place: from which, if you have the patience to read it, you may discover how many reaches, or windings, are in this traject. Pillaging this boatman's history, and pointing to the shore, our sagacious tradesman told us, "all those houses were built in *one* day's time. The prevaricating knave ought to have given a different emphasis; and have said 'in one *day's* time.' But wit was always a shuffling fellow, and seldom a friend to truth." The hawker's jocularity, from the same source, was next exerted on a church, of which we had a prospect: which he said was as *light* by night as it was by day! Of the truth of which quaint pun the inventor had no doubt. Yet the unvarying force of gravitation is not perhaps absolutely certain. But I am now getting out of my depth; and will therefore hasten on shore to Gravesend. In despite of the noble stream

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that washes the banks, this said Gravesend is a dirty, disagreeable place; and for pitiful extortion unrivalled. If you have but little money in your purse, or if you feel indignation or sorrow, at beholding man in the daily practice of petty theft, till the confirmed habit, makes him believe thieving to be justice, and necessary to his happiness, arrange your affairs, so as to make but a short stay at Gravesend. It was my good fortune to remain there only one night. My journey was unnecessary: no pass was required. But of this I was ignorant. The expense and trouble were trifling, the characters and scene of action new, and the pain of uncertainty was relieved. And now thank your benignant stars, that you have escaped from a Gravesend-boat, and have only paid so trifling a tax on good sense, and good manners. The potentate of the North, at whose breath

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all things shake, having honoured a yatcht by his presence, issued an edict, commanding that it should no longer remain a paltry yatcht, but become a glorious frigate. Peter was not so great as Paul; for Peter could only change a brown loaf into Banbury mutton.

LETTER IV.

AND now comes the day of departure: and now farewel for a time to London, that hive of souls; itself the soul of Britain, the seat of action, the city of great events! Farewel to many pleasures, and to many pains! to friends in whom the heart delighted! to foes that persecuted they knew not why! we go in search of better days.

Before we embark, suffer me to make

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an observation, and tell a story. Fortune is a capricious jade; she flies from those who pursue; and pursues those who shun her. The remark is old; but not, I believe, the tale to which it leads.

In the town of Halberstadt, not long ago, there lived a tanner, remarkable for having been made enormously rich against his will. During the seven years' war, the French, being at this place, had collected all the cattle in the environs, the skins of which they had to sell. The tanners of Halberstadt had but little power to buy, one alone excepted. To him the French applied; but, not understanding speculation after a certain quantity, he absolutely refused any more. Conquerors are not to be trifled with; and finding that their persuasions, which indeed were numberless, could not prevail, they resorted to the *argumentum*

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baculinum, and the tanner was at last beat into compliance. It was however under the condition that the other tanners would, at a fair price, lend him their tan-pits; and for this the argumentative French very readily undertook. The tanners were summoned, refused, and the rhetoric of the bastinado was again employed. It was resistless; the tanners let out their tan-pits. The tanner, who bought the hides at one-sixth of their value, parted with the dollars he had been so desirous to retain; and, in a few years afterward, became the wealthiest tanner in Germany.

I will give you another example of the caprice of this said Madam Fortune.

In Germany there are lotteries of various construction. Of one of these the law is, that he who draws a first prize, a second, and a third, shall the fourth time be one of the five that are to draw for the capital lot of I know

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not how many thousand dollars. A cooper, who loved to tap the barrels he hooped, bought a ticket, which came up a prize once, twice, and thrice; but the foolish fellow was thirsty; and being offered drink for the present, and money to buy more for a fortnight to come, he could not resist the temptation, and sold his ticket, which was a fourth time the fortunate number. He comforted himself with his can; and made a second venture, with exactly the same good and ill success. To another man this would have been horribly vexatious; but the jovial cooper let it pass; and when the next lottery came, made another purchase. The third time it had arrived at the third stage of winning, and he was again on the point of parting with his chance. By something of persuasion, and something of force, the reckless fellow was prevented. "Fortune," said his friends,

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or perhaps his wife, though this is the kind of husband a wife knows least how to manage, "Fortune absolutely persecutes you to accept her favours: why do you so perversely cast them from you?" For once the sot heard reason; and the doctrine of chances proved how dangerous it is to lay the long odds; for the cooper's ticket again gained the great prize.

From us Fortune is flying; and we are now in pursuit. The sequel will shew how perverse a jade she is, and how determined not to be overtaken.

On the first of July, 1799, we went on board the Kennet, Captain Thomson. All was confusion, all hurry. Barges, loaded with prodigious bales, lay beside her; a dozen men were straining every nerve to raise them over her side, and stow them between her ribs. It excited attention and surprise to see these cumbrous packs wedged

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with such contrivance as scarcely to leave a vacancy. Every thing that suppleness of limb shews, sinews and muscular force could effect, was in continual exertion. The vessel was to fall down the river the next tide; which seemed incompatible with the labour to be performed.

With what additional wonder do I recollect scenes like these in my native country, having compared them with the inattention I since have witnessed. Here every man was active and intelligent; and one even supremely above the rest. Indeed it was prodigious. He was the mate; he directed the whole; his eye was every where; and his arm seemed to work miracles. He was full six feet high; and when the ponderous load seemed to defy their collected strength, he came, applied his giant force, and, at the first pull, it began to move. His agility was no less sur-

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prising, and almost irreconcilable to such bulk; for his wrist would doubly measure that of an ordinary man. His understanding was equal to his bodily power; he instantly saw what was wrong, and the way in which it was to be rectified. Give but his faculties another circle of action, and an epic poet might have made this man his hero: yet he was but the mate of a ship, subject to a captain who, though no fool, was far indeed from his equal; and when I asked him if he did not mean to be a captain himself, answered with a sigh—"I wish, Sir, I may ever have so much good fortune."

In what a traverse and frequently ludicrous manner does accident arrange the place and office of man, and the affairs of this poor world!

The mate's name was Baird; and he and his commander were both Scotchmen. In the invoice, he was

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written captain, and the captain supercargo; a falsehood to which the infamous practice of pressing has given birth; a mate, like a foremast man, being liable to be pressed.

When I came on board, and saw the work that was still to do, I concluded it was impossible it should be accomplished. The mate himself doubted, but hoped, and worked like legion. Yes; we were at Gravesend the next day, where we were examined at the Alien Office; and on the evening of the third, anchored at the Nore.

The ocean was before us; the evening was calm; the expanse vast; the shores of Essex and of Kent were to the right and left; and the fleet with which we were to sail, with our convoy, and the admiral's ship that guards the Nore, were all in view. The silence that reigned was suddenly interrupted by the eight o'clock bell, that rang

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from vessel to vessel; and, much more agreeably, by the admiral's military band. We were at a proper distance; and the music came so softened to our ears that it was delightful.

The captain went on board our convoy; received his sailing instructions; and the next morning the fleet, about thirty in number, was under weigh.

Owing to the closeness with which the ship was stowed, the decks were so belumbered, that it required the cat-like activity of a sailor to pass, without a fall, to the forecastle. I supposed they were so to continue. How much was I mistaken! No sooner was the business of setting the sails performed, than the active Baird began a clearance. All hands were at work; the hatches opened; room for stowage still was to be found; cables were coiled; and, in less than half an hour, no signs of disorder or incumbrance were to be

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seen. In some things, how full of caution is a sailor! How active is he, and how orderly on the approach of storm or battle! What contradictions are there in his habits! The least appearance of defect in his shrouds, braces, or rigging, must be repaired: his decks must be daily washed; to every thing that regards the safety of the ship, the strictest attention must be paid. He must not sleep more than four hours at a time, and never soundly: the least alarm must bring him upon deck. His eye must alternately be upon the watch; his apprehension of danger must never cease. Meanwhile, his own convenience is utterly neglected. Being at sea, he puts on any dirty or ragged jacket, sleeps upon boards or ropes, and feeds on the coarsest fare. Our cook was half covered with grease and tar; his hands were uncommonly large, and chapped; and he washed his dishes

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with a cable's end. It often happens that the sailor's beef is half putrid, his butter and cheese the same; his biscuits swarming with maggots; and his water stinking. To this he is sometimes by necessity reduced; and the landsman is astonished at the habits which such hard necessities have taught. But a voyage to Hamburgh is seldom of so much severity; and the pampered passenger as seldom goes to sea unprovided.

LETTER V.

OUR convoy was sluggish, and we were off the Norfolk coast on the fifth. We gave it some few parting sighs, remembering the relations and friends that were there; and who, perhaps, had they known the incident, would

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have brought down their telescopes, to have taken a last view. Was it affection or vanity that gave me this thought? Let it be permitted to hope the best.

He that makes a voyage and meets with no adventures, using the common phrase, must be greatly in or greatly out of luck; unless indeed we suppose him fast asleep, which, with the convenience of a close carriage, is the way that most travellers see the world. A watchman, shut up in his box at midnight, without the aid of his candle and lantern, sees it as well. We were willing to keep awake, and were not in want of stimulants. I had been to sea before more than once, yet had numberless things to remark: especially as I had never before sailed with a convoy. The Kennet was a good sailer; but if we ran before our guardian, we were liable to have a ten-pounder sent, with a possibility of hit-

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ting us, as a warning order to *keep astern.* If we were too close, the peril was that of *running foul* of the ships *under the Commodore's lee.* If the weather *fell* hazy, this danger increased. If it was a calm, we must no less carefully keep our distance. Should you have supposed that, being on the boundless ocean, you must always have sea room enough, the above hints may help to rectify your mistake.

On the sixth, we were off the Texel; on the seventh saw Lord Duncan's fleet; and on the eighth were still upon the Dutch coast. I repeat what the mariners and their charts told me; for I could not see land. The sailing under the protection of cannon balls, the *look-out* that was kept for the approach of an enemy, and the hostile fleets of Britain proudly riding on a threatened shore, inspired thoughts which——I will take another time to tell you what

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these thoughts were. We caught gurnels, a pretty but cruel warfare. The wretched animal was generally an hour gasping for the medium in which, till then, he had breathed, and dying with difficulty.

A more animating incident occurred. Perhaps you are ignorant that smugglers, if pursued, will sink their cargoes of gin, and leave a buoy; by the aid of which they are sometimes recovered. From one of these, as it was supposed, a keg was seen to come swimming among the fleet. The sight awakened two passions at once—drunkenness and ambition. To what dangers do they expose the thirsty, the daring, and the rash! The fleet was under sail; and the keg swam in a contrary direction. We perceived a consultation was held on board a ship but little distant. In a moment, one of the sailors began to strip. We

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watched his proceedings with surprise and apprehension; we saw him plunge into the sea, and stem the waves with such eagerness that it seemed impossible for his strength not to be presently exhausted. How impatiently did the eye pursue him, his head now hidden, and now seen dancing among the waves, till we could no longer catch a glimpse. It was a fearful distance. There was something so daring in the attempt, and so vigorous in the execution, that he became a kind of hero; in whose dubious fate every heart was interested.

Meanwhile the sailors, who first discovered the prize in question, *lay to;* that is, turned the ship so that the sails did not catch the winds: and hoisted out their boat. In this they went in search of the swimmer and the keg. We could not discover their proceedings; but we learned, after their re-

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turn, that the sailor had overtaken and seized the object of his wishes; and they brought him and his prize once more on board of the ship to which he belonged in triumph.

A rash action, when successful, never fails to be admired. To people who live on shore, the remarks, language, and adventures of mariners are often amusing. The answer, however, which the latter return to passengers, are frequently surly, and expressive of contempt. Sailors, I assure you, are as pragmatic, and full of pedantry, in their way, as any Doctor the Universities can afford. Men are always surprised at, and diverted by each other's ignorance; forgetting their own.

The seaman, however, has a feature common to us all; he is pleased with those who will listen to his complaints. One of our men told me how long he

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had served on board a man of war, the sufferings he there endured, and painted the despotism of naval officers, in the anecdotes he related. A Captain, who perhaps had read Culpepper, or some such erudite author, thought proper to physic his crew regularly once a month; and to take care the doses he prescribed were actually swallowed. This was not all; if the men were sick afterwards, they were put in the bilboes, to convince them they were well; and one poor fellow, who was extremely weak, was flogged for not running fast enough up the shrouds.

Another of these commanders having given a man three dozen lashes on the starboard of the vessel, ordered him two dozen more on the larboard; that, as he said, one side might not laugh at the other.

The man cited many more incidents of a like kind; adding, that when on

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board a king's ship, he many a time wished himself dead. Observe, I can only be answerable for my own veracity; I faithfully repeat what I was told.

I shall be equally accurate in what I am going to relate; though it is on a subject which some naturalists have treated as absurd. The Captain and Mate of the Kennet, had both navigated the Coast of Norway, the Northern Ocean, and the Atlantic; and I questioned them concerning the Kraken. They neither of them pretended to have seen this supposed stupendous monster of the waters: but they immediately expressed their firm conviction of its existence. I asked their reasons; and they affirmed it had been twice seen within the last four years.

The first instance they cited was that of a Captain coming from Archangel, or Greenland, through the At-

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lantic; who was surprised at the appearance of rocks unknown to the chart of mariners, and immediately ordered out his boat, to have them examined; meanwhile the Kraken, that is, the imaginary rocks, disappeared, and he sailed over the place; but forgot, during his astonishment, to sound.

Their second instance was more circumstantial. About two years and a half before the time at which they spoke, a Dane, sailing through the Firth of Forth, on the coast of Scotland, was so terrified, at the appearance of rocks in such a place, that he *lay to;* being for some time persuaded that he had lost his reckoning, and had arrived he knew not where. After consideration, he took courage, and sailed past them; and when he arrived at Dundee, gave a relation of what he had seen. Finding himself at first disbelieved, he and his crew made oath of

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the fact; either at the Custom-house or before a Magistrate of Dundee. The narrators were both Scotchmen; and affirmed they spoke of the attestation being thus made from their own knowledge. Persons, who shall deem it worth their trouble, may easily make an inquiry whether any such attestation exists at Dundee.

My informants confirmed, unquestioned, the usual accounts, fabulous or not, that fishermen find plenty of fish on the back of the Kraken; as they do on sand banks, at a certain distance below the surface; and that these fishermen hasten away, as soon as they perceive the Kraken beginning to rise; because when it goes down, it occasions a dangerous whirlpool. These, you will recollect, are the old stories of Pontoppidan.

Finding this Leviathan so familiar to their belief, I next inquired if they

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had heard, or knew any thing of the sea-snake, by some called the sea-worm? To this question I received a still more direct answer. The Mate, Mr. Baird, who certainly was not a liar by habit, whatever mistake or credulity might make him, assured me that, about the midway in a voyage to America, in the Atlantic, he had himself seen a fish, comparatively small in the body, of from forty to fifty fathoms in length; and that it had excited great terror in the Captain, who was well acquainted with those latitudes, lest it should sink the ship.

They both related other stories, concerning the appearance of this sea-worm: asserting that it will rise out of the water as high as a common main mast.

Should you ask, do you repeat these things because you think them credible? I answer, no. But who can af-

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firm he can mark out the boundaries of possibility? Some mariners treat these tales as absolutely false and ridiculous: others seriously affirm them to be true; and I think it a duty to collect evidence, and to remain on this question as on many another, in a certain degree of scepticism.

They spoke of another fact; which, supposing them to speak truth, deserves attention. The waves in the Western Ocean are sometimes so oily, from dead whales, as it is imagined, that they are not much disturbed by a brisk gale. The sailor's brisk gale, observe, by you and me would be called a high wind.

LETTER VI.

REMEMBER I left you in a gale at sea, and a high wind on shore: but what

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would you think of a stiff breeze? I heard one described by a sailor, who swore that it shaved him; that he could not keep his hair safe on his head; and that it made the ship sneeze. His metaphors, and the composure with which he spoke of a tempest, that to a landsman would have been so full of terror, were amusing.

Our voyage was performed by the aid of gentle gales; and we got in view of Heligoland on the morning of the 9th. Being now out of danger from an enemy, the ships were allowed to part company, and each make the best of her way. To people weary of the qualms and inconveniences of a sea-voyage, and impatient to arrive at the place of their destination, with the latent hope of unknown pleasures from unknown sources, this was welcome news. The Captain was teazed with our questions; and we were much dis-

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appointed to find there was little hope we should yet see Hamburgh, within four and twenty hours.

It was late in the day before we arrived at the red buoy, where usually the pilot comes on board. We now entered the Elbe, the navigation of which is both difficult and dangerous, if circumstances are unfavourable; and I could not but admire and most sincerely applaud the precautions taken for safety, and augur favourably of the industry and understanding I should find in Hamburgh. These, however, are the labours of sea-faring men; and such are the dangers of the waters, that sailors, who speaking of them as a class, are far from being the most intelligent, exert very sagacious means to guard against these dangers. The apparent width of the Elbe is great; but the bed of the navigable channel is comparatively small: buoys there-

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fore have been placed, and distinguished by colour and numbering, to mark out the course of the stream, which winds exceedingly.

The eye of the traveller is always caught by those objects which differ greatly from such as he has been accustomed to see; and the appearance of our pilot was to us highly original. His figure was diminutive, yet so bundled up in jackets and breeches, that it was swelled out to a very respectable bulk. His breeches, far from being small clothes, were large and loose, and had pockets, or rather paunches, at the sides, in which he put his pipe, his tobacco, his bread and cheese, and other necessaries. I suppose he wore half a dozen pair; for he unbuttoned three, with great unconcern, before us all, to come at a fourth. His face was thin, his forehead contracted, his chin peaked, his nose large, his mouth

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wide, his teeth black and decayed, and his eyes small and red. Having given his directions, as soon as he had leisure he dressed, or rather undressed himself, that he might look respectably before the ladies; that is, he pulled off two jackets, the first exceedingly thick and weather proof, two pair of trowsers, and his boots, which hung loose about his legs. He then appeared in a grey damask doublet, made probably from his great grandmother's holiday gown, long quartered shoes, and a pair of pewter single-tongued buckles, extravagantly large, and diamond cut. He had a gigantic kind of sleeve-button to fasten his waistband, and another of the same form but less, at his shirt collar; these, by their embossing, equalled his buckles in splendour: and in his now reduced size, he accurately resembled the wooden men cut in Dutch toys. I found amusement in studying

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this figure, it being the first of the kind I had seen. His language was low Dutch, but he spoke broken English; and I endeavoured to make him talk: but as he knew nothing, he could say nothing. The office of pilot frequently requires great presence of mind, activity, and courage: this man had certainly no such qualities.

Under his guidance, however, we entered the Elbe; and the shores of Holstein on the left, and Hanover on the right, began to close upon us. I know not when or how it came there, but the picture I had in my mind of Holstein, was that of one of the rude and naked countries of the North; and I felt surprise as we approached its banks to see them frequently adorned with houses built of brick, and the gable ends painted green. This, however, as I afterwards found, is by no means the general style of building in

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that province; but it appears that men every where take delight in having pleasant habitations on the banks of rivers. At this part of the Elbe the left hand shore had a flat and low appearance; while in Hanover we could see, not mountains, for there are none in these parts of Germany, but high lands. I know not why, but the traveller appears to have a latent expectation that every thing which he is to see, is to be unlike every thing he has seen; and is almost disappointed to find that trees are trees, and that the banks of rivers, in foreign countries, are as verdant as those of his native land. It is true, there are in reality marking differences; but these must be sought for in the minuter parts, and not in the grand features of Nature; some few and singular instances excepted.

The Elbe cannot be navigated in the

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dark; for the buoys and pilot marks cannot be discerned; and at twilight we cast anchor. At this the sailors did not repine; it was a necessity to which they knew they must submit; but we, impatient passengers, heard with regret that the wind blew peculiarly fresh and fair. In the middle of the night it strengthened, and opposed the tide; in consequence of which the waves rose, and the ship rolled violently. Doors flew open, boxes and bottles tumbled from their places, and there was a great clatter in the cabin. It seemed strange to be so much disturbed, having now passed the sea, and safely arrived in the river. Trifles, to which we are unaccustomed, excite surprise.

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LETTER VII.

THE anchor was weighed as early as possible; for it was still doubtful whether we should arrive at Hamburgh before the close of day.

According to regulation, the pilot from the red buoy has a right only to proceed to a certain distance; after which another, if he be in readiness, comes on board and takes charge of the vessel. Our little man was very anxious in his hopes that a successor would not appear; and that he should have the whole profit of proceeding to Hamburgh. But he was disappointed. At the proper station his rival came; and he returned. The second pilot was no less characteristic in manner and appearance than the first; though

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very different. His dress, indeed, was nearly the same; but instead of the insignificance of the former, he had an assuming deportment; which, agreeing with the costume, made me imagine I was actually in company with ancient Pistol. With his pipe in his mouth, his wide, straddling gait, and his hands in his breeches' side-pockets, commanding with a kind of bluff authority, and speaking a half unintelligible jargon, the picture was almost complete. His son was with him; a young boy, the likeness and the ape of his father. The decayed state of this man's teeth, made me conjecture that smoaking might be a principal agent in producing this defect; which I afterwards found to be common among the Germans.

This man, however, had activity in his profession; and it was fortunate that he, instead of the former, was

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our pilot: for, in going up the river, had not he and all the crew strongly exerted themselves, we might have been run down by the sluggish neglect of a Dane; which danger we escaped with great difficulty.

As we proceeded, the appearance of the opposite shores considerably varied; we lost sight of the distant high lands in Hanover, and saw nothing but a dead and low flat; while the Holstein bank became elevated, the number of the green-ended houses increased, and the town and fortifications of Gluckstadt came in view. It is low, and we could see little of the palace of which our pilot vaunted. We discerned nothing that in the least approached magnificence; but saw many things that had a charming air of rural calm and cleanliness. These pleasing appearances became more frequent as we approached Altona; but we could not

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sufficiently enjoy them, for it was now once more the close of day. Being at Altona, we were glad, though surprised, to find ourselves within a gunshot's distance of Hamburgh: but our joy on this occasion was short; for we heard, with vexation, that the gates of Hamburgh, as well of the port as of the city, were regularly shut at dusk; and that admission, even for a prince, was then impossible.

Altona, like Hamburgh, is a seaport town; and it may safely be prophesied, that at no very distant period, they will form but one place. The number of shipping at Altona, was considerable, though small, when compared to those that crowded the harbours of Hamburgh. But the appearance that catches the eye, and distinguishes these cities from all that I had before seen, was the excessive quantity of windows in the houses; the front

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surfaces of which are nearly one half of glass. I had remarked the upper stories of certain manufacturing houses in London, that have rows of windows in the same manner; and inquired if the houses I now saw were all manufactories? It was a question the sailors could not answer, but I afterwards found that every house was thus constructed.

About nine o'clock, we came to moorings in the river, without the harbour; exceedingly mortified at being obliged to sleep another night on board; knowing that every thing to give us a pleasant reception had been prepared by our friends on shore. Expectation is whetted by difficulty and delay: yet expectation, without these stimulants, is generally too high. We were soon to be on German ground; and Germany is one of the grand divisions of Europe; renowned for its ancient re-

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sistance to the Roman arms, and claiming in modern times, not only the destructive honours of war, but a high rank in every department of science and belles lettres; we should therefore find it peopled with the learned, the polite, and the brave. With these, and a thousand other grateful images, we appeased our impatience, and once more waited the return of day. How eager is man for the future,—how insensible to the present!—Had he the power, how would he lend wings to time, and wish his life away!

LETTER VIII.

THE morning came, the Captain ordered out his boat, and we had scarcely patience to descend into it with care.

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The fleet that had arrived had to find births in the harbour: ships must change their stations; some to depart, others to load, or unload: the boats and barges employed seemed almost as numerous as the ships themselves: multitudes of the peasants that inhabit the banks of the Elbe, who, from necessity, are both watermen and farmers, were arriving, male and female, in their skiffs, to provision the devouring city: all was life, all was motion; and we, rowing in the midst of the scene, had our faculties wholly absorbed by the countless novelties that at once invaded them. The animation of the Elbe cannot indeed be said to equal that of the Thames: but then the objects were so different, and their appearance generally was so uncouth and boorish, that the eye was bewildered, and unable to examine them individually.

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We were stopped at the entrance of the harbour by the voice of a sentinel, and questioned concerning who we were, and what our trunks contained; but this is rather a form than a scrutiny; for few ports are so free of access, or give so little trouble with respect to Custom-house duties, as that of Hamburg. The government of Hamburg, comparatively, has laid but few restraints upon trade: that is, it has practised fewer of the vices of finance, common, more or less, to all governments; which absurdly rob, by their endeavours to enrich themselves. We landed on the *Vorsetzen*, at the principal stairs of the harbour, and were immediately struck by their inconvenience: they were narrow, steep, and dangerous, especially to persons carrying luggage. The *krahnziehers*, or city porters, perceiving we were English, and unacquainted with the place,

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pressed their service upon us, which we eagerly enough accepted; and having landed our trunks on the quay, one of them went for a coach, and another for a car, to remove us and our effects. We intreated them to make haste, which they promised; and though they kept us waiting in vexation above half an hour, they might still be said to keep their word: as Germans, they were quick. We had indeed heard much of the inflexible phlegm of this people, but as yet we were novices in its practical effects. While we stood watching our luggage, gazed at and gazing, the appearance of those around us strange to us, and ours to them, among other things that attracted attention were two waggons, if they might so be called, that met; and though the street, speaking of Hamburg, was tolerably wide, could scarcely pass. Each was drawn by four horses, two abreast,

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the driver riding on the near or left hand shaft-horse; each had four wheels, and not two feet broad at the bottom, though both were uncommonly long, the axle-trees projected above a foot on each side; in short, nothing could be more ill constructed for turning and passing in narrow streets. The convenience which would have resulted from their small width, was wholly destroyed by the projecting axle-trees; the rope harness was so long, and the horses drew at such a distance from each other, as at once to employ the space of drawing abreast, and what was nearly sufficient to have drawn lengthways. This, added to the length of the waggon, the awkwardness of the drivers, and the lazy unconcern with which they sat and looked, when they had embarrassed each other, before they determined how they would act, combining and harmonizing with other appearances around us, immediately gave birth to

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much surmise and meditation on national character. It was heightened too by the contents of one of the waggons, which was loaded with the filth and ordure of the city, as offensive almost to the sight as to the smell. Let us not, however, be too hasty in our conclusions, the detail of facts as they arise will best explain the real state of things: individually they may mislead, but collected and compared, they must elucidate.

It is true the next I have to relate is of the unfavourable kind. Three of the *krahnziehers* harnessed themselves to the car that drew our luggage; the distance they had to take it might be six or seven hundred yards, and a porter in London would willingly have done the whole work for three shillings; but their demand was twelve. It is true three of them thought proper to employ themselves, and they rendered that which might have been easy and expe-

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ditious, laborious and slow. Neither was their demand complied with; one third was abated: but then they supposed themselves paid no more than their due, and were dissatisfied that strangers were not taxed higher. It is said indeed, and I suppose truly, that throughout Germany labour is no where so extravagantly paid as in Hamburg: but a comparative estimate of the rate of labour is much wanted; for it is a subject on which there are many and gross mistakes. In proportion as the inhabitants of a country are ignorant, labour is supposed to be cheap: the very reverse is generally the truth.

To Mr. Freeman,

Bath.

SIR,

I HAD once the pleasure of receiving a very humane and sensible

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letter from you on the part of my father. After the character he has given of you, I do not wonder at it. Benevolence and wisdom frequently are, and ought always to be united. I am now to address you on his behalf. He informs me he is indebted to you to the amount of ten pounds, which was lent to him in necessity, and which I assure you is remembered by him with gratitude: it is an affair, that if I am not mistaken, does honour both to you and him. He is very anxious to have you satisfied that you shall not suffer for your generosity. I have it not in my power without great inconvenience to discharge the debt just at present, though it is a burthen which I wish to take from my father. I shall be enabled within this year, that is, at the beginning of next November, to pay it. I am secretary to a society which allows me that sum; and which, if you

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will accept of my note, or a draft payable at that time, shall be appropriated to this use. I shall be glad if you will favor me with a line respecting the affair, and after begging you will accept my most sincere thanks for the obligations I owe you on my father's account, take the liberty to subscribe myself, &c.

January 9, 1779.

To Mr. Richard Hughes.

Barnstaple.

SIR,

I SHALL execute with pleasure any little commands you will please to favour me with, and beg you will not suppose it any obligation. I have enquired concerning a first singer, but hear of none except Mr. Cubit. I have not applied to him, because I am told

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he has been with you before, and that he seldom visits one company twice. If you want a capricious hoyden, who values herself upon her character and virtue, yet walks about the town in men's clothes, with a long stride, and a fierce cocked hat; who has more spirits, and as many antics as an ape or a tumbler; who is a coquet this minute, and a prude the next; raps out a great oath now, and anon reads you a lecture upon propriety and decorum; talks *to* herself, *at* herself, *of* herself, and never for five minutes together upon any other subject; who affects the girl, and whose wrinkles are as apparent as her vanity; who yet does every manager she is with, considerable service, by the singularity of her character, and the free airs she gives herself among the men; who on the stage, has considerable merit in breeches' parts, coquets, &c., but who will be Wall and Moon-

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shine, or haunt you both sleeping and waking; in short, if you want a person who is sentimental, dissipated, reserved, obliging, talkative, sullen, laughing, pouting, and all in less time than I could copy this period: who has many indications of strong sense, and more of absolute insanity: whose heart would direct her to do right, but whose vanity will not permit her: I say, if such a person pleases you, then take Mrs. H——. If you suspect me of pique or ill-nature while I have been painting this picture, you wrong me. I have not, nor is it probable I ever should again have, occasion to associate with Mrs. H——. If she should say it were a bad likeness, I will mend the copy when she mends the original. We have a new afterpiece of Mr. Sheridan's coming out this evening, "The Critic," from which we expect great things. Pray give my best respects to

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Mrs. Hughes, and believe me to be sincerely yours.

T. H.

Oct. 30th, 1779.

To Mr. Holcroft.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I AM glad the trifle I sent came safe to hand. Mr. Freeman's receipt is sufficient. You did not mention whether Mr. Freeman still continues your friend. I wish you would be kind enough to let me know whether you have all your garden ground, and your bed of asparagus still, and what you chiefly depend on for your livelihood. Let me beg of you not to be unhappy. When you can no longer make up your payments, give up your all and come to me. I have told you frequently, and I cannot repeat it too

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often, I will never see you want. I am afraid you think the little I have hitherto done for you an obligation: I think I discover it in your letters. Let me intreat you, do not consider it in this light. You cherished me in infancy, and I should be very wicked to see you perish in age: you loved me then, and I love and reverence you now. I will shew you how sincere I am in my professions, the moment I have it in my power. I am exceedingly concerned for my poor mother's afflictions, I hope she endures them with patience and fortitude, which alone can alleviate and make them lighter. I was not at home when your friends from Bath called, I should have been happy to have seen them, but they never came again. I hope you bear the burthen of old age cheerfully: nothing but indifference to the accidents of life can make them supportable. Life itself is to the wisest,

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happiest, and longest lived, short, uncertain, and chequered with good and evil; a kind of dream that ends in a profound sleep. You are travelling towards the grave, and I am following you very fast, nay, possibly may finish the journey before you; but let us not be unhappy on that account: we shall rest from our labours, while our sons and daughters in numberless succeeding generations shall toil in the same steps, have the same hopes and disappointments, and sink at last into the same forgetfulness. Life is an April day; if we are impatient and out of humour, it is overcast with tempests, clouds, and rain; but if we bound our desires and are cheerful, sunshine and serenity prevail. Mrs. Holcroft and the three little ones are all well, as are all friends, who frequently inquire after you. You would be delighted with the children, especially the boy, who

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is a fine little fellow, reads well, and is learning French and Latin.

To Mr. Holcroft.

King's Mead Square, Bath.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I TAKE great pleasure in hearing of your welfare, and that you are not likely to become unsettled again, which, if I had not a house to invite you to, would give me great pain to reflect on, more especially at your time of life. I cannot tell you how much I respect Mr. Freeman, he certainly must be a very benevolent, worthy man, and I beg you will assure him from me that he shall be certain not to lose the least part of the sum he has lent you: and that I am ready to give him my notes, if he pleases to ac-

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cept of them, for the payment at such stated periods, as I find myself able to pay them at. Your property in your garden, and your own integrity, dear Sir, are sufficient security; but I would willingly remove every burthen from your shoulders, as well as give Mr. Freeman every certainty in my power. I am every day more esteemed, and I believe, if I have life and health, there is little doubt of my success. I hope, Sir, you will not think me rude in cautioning you not to be too eager in increasing your stock; as by having more affairs on your hands than your small capital can supply, you may easily lose the whole; besides that you bring a degree of trouble and anxiety on your mind that your health cannot now support perhaps. I am exceedingly glad to hear that my mother is better. We are all in good health, our relations dine with us on Sunday, and we always

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speak of you. Mr. Marsac is not arrived. My comedy is to be played next season. God bless you both, and make you happy. I am, dear father, &c.

March 31st.

To Fulke Greville, Esq.

SIR,

BEFORE I proceed to any other subject, permit me to assure you that I not only think myself greatly honoured by your correspondence, but greatly obliged by your remarks, and more especially by the candour and liberality with which they are made. Indeed, Sir, these sensations have made too powerful an impression to be soon, or easily forgotten. Your ideas of consistency, however I may have failed, agree entirely with mine; for which reason, whenever you find absurdities or in-

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consistencies, I shall be glad if you will freely point them out. Your objection to the Two Knights is well founded. I will make Sir Harry, a Lord, or Sir Hornet, a Mr. ——. Vandervelt is in the same predicament. A large fortune, and the illiterate manners of Turnbull, are sufficiently improbable, unless what Osborne says, when he draws his character in the first act, reconciles it to truth. I think your hint, however, a good one, and worth attending to. If any phrases, words, or other alterations of that nature, occur to you in reading, I beg you will not scruple to write them on the blank leaf, being convinced that you have too much candour to take offence if I should happen to differ with you occasionally. If you understand that Sir Hornet sends the Turnbulls to his nephew's house as a residence, I have erred in expressing myself, and must

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correct. The last thing you have noticed I confess affects me a good deal. I thought I had contrived the plot so as to keep the audience in suspense relative to the real character of Osborne; if I have failed in this the error is a capital one indeed. It is true I could not make Osborne a rascal so palpably as to take away all probability of the contrary, because the mind would have been too much shocked at the want of poetical justice in the denouement; the point to be hit was that perplexity which must arise in the mind on seeing a worthy person likely to be betrayed by an unworthy one; but yet to preserve a possibility of his salvation by having a possibility of your suspicions of the supposed unworthy one ill founded. Now to certain minds who are intimately in the mechanical secret of plot and catastrophe, &c. I hardly know how this is to be effected. You,

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Sir, know that a comedy must end happily, because critics have made it an inevitable rule. You see as you proceed there is no way of doing this, but by making a certain character (Osborne for instance,) not what he appears to be: you foresee, therefore, this will happen, and your concern for the distress of another vanishes. But in what labyrinth shall the poet bewilder you, Sir, who are possessed of this clue. If the whole audience see as far as you, Sir, my play loses half its merit. The work in question was to be a comedy, the auditors were to laugh; wit, humour, variety of character, of manners, of incident, were absolute requisites for a good comedy, and as entirely so as instruction and reformation from the fable and moral. The poet's attention must, therefore, inevitably be divided; he must bestow a part on each. If the catastrophe of my play is not

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more moral, more forcible, and more affecting, than that of any late production, it is worse than any of them, because the plot has greater capabilities, but the nature of the work would not permit it to be as much so as if it had had but one whole and undivided intention, that is, as if it had been a Tragedy. Do not imagine, Sir, that I am seized with the irritability of authorship; whenever I am chagrined it will be at myself for committing errors, not at others for telling me of them. I am afraid there is truth in your objection, though I confess I have been told by some readers they were entirely at a loss concerning the catastrophe till it happened: but it is evident they either said false, or were less discerning than you. Continue, Sir, to tell me truth. They will not flatter me at the Theatre. I will retrieve my errors where I can. I am concerned, however, Sir, at giving

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you the labour of writing, you will be in town soon; or at Petersham, I shall be proud to wait on you; you will give me your opinion with greater ease: I find already it will be of much service to me, and I repeat, I think myself greatly honoured, and indebted to that philanthropy which could prompt you so cheerfully to the present undertaking. I am, Sir, &c.

September 4th.

To Fulke Greville, Esq.

SIR,

I HAVE this moment received and read your last letter: your attention to me is not only an honour to me, but to yourself, Sir; it expresses the anxiety of a generous mind. I continue to think that your suggestion of Osborne's gratitude is a very happy improvement,

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and as such have endeavoured to give it all the expression and force I could from the mouth of Osborne. As to Sir Harry, he appears to me to be so overflowing with passion, that is, the turn is so sudden and unexpected, and he is so affected with Osborne's friendship and virtue in disguise, and at the hideous danger he had just escaped, that, if I feel right, he *cannot* speak, except in exclamation. The difficulty of making impassioned characters say neither too little nor too much is, as you observe, exceedingly great: and the plot frequently obliges the author to say too much; but it never fails in some degree to offend. I confess, Sir, you almost terrify me about the loss of Melissa's fortune, but I have no remedy; the reason is what I gave you in our last conversation. Mr. Nicholson says, were it not done, he confesses he would not do it; and yet, as it is at

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present managed, the effect is such that he can scarcely wish it undone; nor does he seem to think there is much risk in it. He approved your beforementioned hint concerning Osborne's gratitude, exceedingly, and thought it very happy. I don't know how enough to thank you for your kind offers concerning the prologue; but Mr. Nicholson is at present about one, and had begun it before I received your letter; how far it may succeed in mine or Mr. Harris's opinion, I cannot yet predict; but I am under no disagreeable concern on that subject, because I know Mr. Nicholson's candour and good sense so well as to be certain, should it not chance to be happy, he will not suffer the least chagrin; not to mention, Sir, that I should be exceedingly sorry again to subject your performance to the caprice, or ill taste, of others, to which I myself, in this business, am

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entirely subjected. I have not yet seen Mr. Henderson: he was out of town.

I am, &c.

T. H.

To the same.

SIR,

I AM very much concerned at not knowing where or which way to remit the copy of the comedy to you, being ignorant of where you are, or where this may find you. I went on Tuesday with it into Somerset Street, but found the house entirely shut up. The trouble you have taken in reading and advising, demands every attention from me. It is to be played on Saturday the 13th. If you come to town, or can instruct me how to send the comedy to you, I shall be happy. I assure you, Sir, you can scarcely conjecture the

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trouble and chagrin attending things of this nature: there have been three epilogues written before there was one to please the speaker; and at this instant, I am not certain of finding any person to speak the prologue. Mr. Henderson said he could not please himself in it, and therefore declined it: and Mr. Lee Lewis, to whom it was afterwards given, who fancies himself a wit and a critic, does not find opportunities enough of regaling his acquaintance in the upper gallery; whether he will or will not speak it, is yet to be determined. There have been various alterations made in the play, and a very considerable one relative to the loss of Melissa's fortune, though your objection is not entirely obviated. I have written a speech for Sir Harry, on the effects of gaming, as consonant to the ideas you hinted as I could; and I believe it will have a charming effect.

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Your turn too for the denouement is exceedingly happy. I can only add, Sir, that I think myself exceedingly obliged to you for these favours, and shall take the earliest opportunity when you are in town, with your permission, of thanking you in person.

I am, Sir, &c.

To the same.

SIR,

I AM exceedingly happy that you do not suspect me of ingratitude: indeed, Sir, I should detest myself had I, by my own neglect, treated you with the least disrespect. It would have been a symptom not only of an inflated, silly mind, but of a bad heart also. I repeat this, Sir, because I assure you I was very uneasy till the receipt of your obliging letter removed

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my doubts. I cannot help again observing to you, Sir, that the approbation of people of known worth and undoubted abilities is very flattering; and I hope there will be nothing wrong or indelicate in saying that I feel myself peculiarly happy and elevated at having gained the esteem of Mr. and Mrs. Greville; and I am certain I shall neglect no opportunity of endeavouring to improve a friendship so honourable to me, and, at one period of my life, so seemingly incompatible. I know, Sir, the most effectual mode of accomplishing this will be to do my duty in society, and assiduously to cultivate such talents as accident or nature has bestowed upon me; and this, Sir, is my most serious intention. Respecting the play, I, Sir, was never satisfied with making Sir Harry lose his sister's fortune; besides that I find it is an incident in the tragedy of the Gamester,

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where, as the hero does not survive the dishonour, it is very proper and happy. However, as few are sufficiently refined to feel properly on this occasion, it has a good stage effect. You can hardly conceive how great the effect of the denouement was on the first night, the whole house seemed taken by surprise; and Osborne's generous account of the reason of his conduct greatly heightened, or rather gave a complete finish to their pleasure. There is another speech, which was written in consequence of some hints I received from conversing with you, which I think one of the best conceived in the whole play. It is Sir Harry's soliloquy in the fourth act, after Melissa has put her fortune in his hands. I very much approve what you are pleased to term the niceties of verbal criticism. An exact and well regulated machine depends as much, if not more, upon small things,

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as great; but still there must be vast labour and precision indeed, if no particle of dust insinuates itself among the cogs and wheels; however, when such is discovered, it would be folly not to brush it away. The epilogue I wrote, and it has a good effect in speaking. The curtailings have some of them been suggested at rehearsals by the performers, and some were my own, but the greatest part were Mr. Harris's. I dislike Sir Harry's squeezing Clara's hand, as much as you can do, I assure you, Sir, it was the insertion of the actors: and I chose rather to submit to that, and many other things I disapproved, than to appear obstinate or opinionated. Mrs. Holcroft desires me to assure you, Sir, she is exceedingly obliged by the kind mention you have made of her, and only wishes it were possible to have an opportunity of expressing her gratitude

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in actions both to you and Mrs. Greville: but this she despairs of.

I am, Sir, &c.

Oct. 28.

To Mr. Freeman.

Bath.

To a heart like mine, addicted, both by principle and constitution, to the glowing emotions of friendship, the philanthropy and warmth of sentiment so conspicuous in your letters, and particularly in your last, are very acceptable. And though I have not leisure to answer you so fully as I wish, nor opportunity to return those many kindnesses you do me, yet to be totally silent would be ungrateful. Let me therefore return you my most sincere thanks for all your favours, particularly for those done to my father: believe me, Sir, they shall never be forgotten. You are pleased to style

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yourself my friend, and I am proud of the appellation: the friendship of good men is not to be obtained upon slight and trivial terms: they know not only their own worth, but that the merits or demerits of those to whom they apply that serious and respectful word, are in a great measure reflected back upon themselves; and this makes them cautious. For my own part, Sir, small as my consequence is in this world, nothing but a thorough conviction of the goodness of a man's heart, could make me accept him for my friend. I am convinced you think in this like me, and I esteem your friendship, Sir, and the friendship of men like you too highly ever to wilfully make myself unworthy of it. Men who feel the dignity of virtue are too proud to be vicious. Excuse this, Sir, I only mean to assure you I will endeavour to equal the good opinion you are pleased to

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entertain of me, and not to write my own eulogy.

To Mr. Freeman.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED yours of the 25th in due course, and have forborne to answer it till now, because I had not money to pay any part of the account before; as soon as I go out to-day I shall pay ten pounds in part to Mr. Ellis, and hope to pay as much more in a few weeks; should you think this too tardy, be kind enough to hint as much, and I will endeavour to quicken my motions. Had I any means of conveyance, I would send you a book just published (by me) in French and English, very curious,—" Memoires de Voltaire écrits par lui-même." If you will be kind enough in your next to in-

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form me who in London sends you parcels oftenest, I can take occasion now and then to send you such trifles as I have any concern in. We complain in London of literary envy among literary men, and often with reason; but our men of letters are far behind those of France in that particular; parties there are as high among the learned, as here among politicians. Their passions are sudden, their wit keen, and their tongues imprudent; all these must have exercise, and as they dare not, like us, talk of beheading prime ministers, tell kings they are fools, and regulate the affairs of nations; they are all judges of wit, taste, poetry, and the belles lettres; and much in the same proportion as we are of politics: that is to say, there are a thousand who affirm and dogmatize, for one who discriminates and judges with temperance and taste. Their authors

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of the present century, who have been famous, are most of them dead or old, and they themselves say they have little hopes from any of the rising generation: but this is a common-place complaint of all ages, and I have no doubt is without foundation now as heretofore. Notwithstanding their universal pretensions to dispute and decide in works of wit and taste, the common people are very ignorant and ill-educated, insomuch that you will see, in the best streets of Paris, the inscriptions on the signs frequently misspelt; which is matter of astonishment to an Englishman, who seldom sees such a thing even on a village chandler's shop sign. I have written the above sketch in obedience to a wish expressed in your last; it is hasty and slight, for I am pressed at present for time, as indeed I generally am. My father is at present in Manchester; but

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he has taken a cottage in Cheshire, whither he and his wife are going in a few days. In his last he desired me to give his kindest love and sincerest thanks to you and your family, for all your kindness and goodness to him; he likewise wishes to know who is Mr. F——'s successor, and if it is necessary he should come to Bath at the expiration of his lease. A line when you have leisure, Sir, will be very acceptable to your sincere friend, and obliged humble servant, T. H.

To Mr. Professor Dugald Stewart.

DEAR SIR,

I AM ashamed of myself, I have treated you with seeming disrespect, by neglecting to answer your letter. This is a thing I should be ashamed of with any person, and espe-

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cially with one who I believe deserves the best esteem of the best men. Hear what I can urge in mitigation, and I hope to obtain your pardon. Your letter arrived just at the moment when my opera of the Noble Peasant was in rehearsal; and I exceedingly hurried and teazed, not only with attending every day at the theatre, but with alterations, writing new songs, new scenes, making retrenchments, &c. &c. to suit the circumstances of introducing this performer, leaving out that, and so on; by which you will readily conjecture I was not idle: add to which the necessity of supplying printers with copy of Les Veillées du Chateau, which I am translating. I even began this letter yesterday, but was cut short at the word *teazed* in the last paragraph, *par un impertinent*, and was obliged to defer the subject till this morning. My defence is ended in

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which I even plead guilty, but hope you will find lenity not ill-bestowed. Mr. de Bonneville has been several months at Evreux. I wrote letter after letter, and received no answer, till at last I grew very seriously uneasy. My letters lay at Paris for him; he is returned, has written, and I am recovered of my fears. I believe, Sir, you know how deeply I am interested in whatever concerns Monsieur de Bonneville. At present, or rather at the moment he wrote, he was severely afflicted with the tooth-ache; but this, though a terrible *evil* while it *lasts*, is not I hope a *lasting evil*. I shall transcribe your kind expressions concerning him in my next, for which give me leave to thank you: I assure you they gave me pleasure, yes, Sir, great pleasure. My delay has had one good effect; had I written sooner I could not have told you where he was, or if

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any where. I received his letter on Thursday last, shall write in a few days, and would advise you, Sir, to do likewise: your letter will be sure to reach him if you direct to him, "Chez Monsieur Barrois le jeune Libraire Rue Hurepaix. à Paris." You are kind enough to say, Sir, you will call on me when you come to London. I have a house and table, Sir; and such as they are, if you will do me the honor of making them your own, while you stay, be it short or long, I shall remember the favor: this is said in plain and simple sincerity, and not in compliment. If you should see Mr. Robertson, junior, pray present my kind respects.

I am, &c.

T. H.

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To Madame de Genlis.

I HAVE received your favor, Madam, and am happy to find the books came safe to hand. As to the retrenchments you are pleased to notice, I will not pretend to justify either my own false delicacy, or that of my nation; but I can affirm, that be it false or true, it exists, and that to an English reader, I have done the book a service, and no injury. A person of your genius, Madam, need not appeal to the approbation of journalists (I speak generally); however, if that were any consolation, I can likewise plead their support on this very subject, as you will see if you will please to read the Critical Review for February last; but I would rather have given *you* satisfaction, Madam, than fifty Reviewers. You may well imagine, Madam, I acted for the good

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of the work, according to the best of my judgment, but I will by no means presume that judgment infallible.—Permit me, Madam, to relate a short story.—A certain young nobleman was remarkable for the elegance of his dress, the symmetry of his person, and the refinement of his manners. The old ladies admired him, the young ladies loved him, and even the handsomest among the men envied him. He was the chief inventor of modes, the leader of fashions, and the arbiter of taste and tailors: above all, he was remarkable for a fine head of hair. Proud of his power, and conscious of his abilities, his ambition was insatiable. One day, while waiting for his hair-dresser, he happened by some odd accident to be turning over the leaves of a folio, in which he saw engravings of Eastern habits—he burst into a laugh.—What strange figures, cried he! how little do

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they understand of grace and elegance! were I among them, I would soon teach them better. Full of this idea, and urged by a thirst of still superior fame, he determined to take a voyage to China, in order to begin by humanizing and converting that vast empire to the principles of good taste. Arrived at Pekin, and being a master of his art, his first endeavour was to gain the suffrages of the fair sex: to effect this, he assailed, and hoped to captivate the daughter of a Mandarine, acknowledged to be the greatest beauty in all Pekin, and, as her admirers daily swore, in all the world. Much depended on a first impression, and this he knew: he therefore paired his nails and powdered his hair, and some add (perhaps maliciously) painted his cheeks. Full of the remembrance of former celebrity, and elate with the consciousness of present perfection,

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he walked up to the glass, admired the image it reflected, and with the step of ease and self-approbation, called for his palanquin and proceeded on his visit. Thus prepossessed, I need not describe his surprise and chagrin, when instead of meeting the approbation he thought so certain, he heard the beauteous Chinese, though struck with his fine form (for proportion must ever please) find fault with that European art—that taste, which he had held so irresistible: the smart short cut of his clothes suffered a thousand ridiculous comparisons; and his frizzed and powdered hair, so bushy and so full, afforded endless laughter. A circumstantial detail is needless. The European, when he beheld the Chinese in their own country, and in great numbers, did not find their fashions so absurd as he thought them in an en-

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graving. He fell desperately in love with the Mandarine's daughter, soon consented to cut off his fine hair, except a single lock, to let his nails grow, and wear a long vest; for without such condescension he found it impossible to win the affection of his mistress—that is, he translated himself into Chinese. Truth and nature are the same in all countries, but the mode of decoration varies in each.—This I hope, Madam, will be a sufficient apology for any occasional liberties I may have taken with your very estimable work; and which, notwithstanding, I believe few people think more highly of than I do, because few have studied its numerous excellences with such minute attention. There is a new edition now in the press, and I shed tears daily over the proofs as I read. I shall receive the favor of your "Theatre d'

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Education," with the respect and thanks such a present, coming from such a person, deserves.

I am, Madam, &c.

T. H.

To Fulke Greville, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I returned from Blackheath, I found your kind note, in which you speak in that mild and true spirit of philosophy, which is worthy of a liberal and philosophic mind. Proof respecting the subject in question *(Instinct)* is not to be had. To me the difficulties seem less to suppose the actions of all animals the consequence of reflection, than to suppose them *blind* impulse. I care not a farthing, whether my opinion be right or wrong;

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but while it *is* my opinion, however weak or absurd it may be, I will never pretend to a conviction I do not feel: and in this I am sure to meet your approbation, because a contrary conduct would be contemptible. A hen that has chickens, rakes up a barley-corn on a dunghill and stands clucking over it till her brood come round her. I could as soon suppose this an action of instinct, viz. an action without an intention, for that is what I understand by the word instinct; I repeat, I could as soon suppose the hen acted from instinct, and without any idea passing in her mind, as I could at seeing a tomtit carry moss into the hollow of a tree, for the safety of itself and young: the action is much more complicated in the one case, than in the other, but I do not see that it warrants me to conclude the tomtit is acting without any intention. My mind

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revolts at the idea of a bird selecting a hole just capacious enough to creep into, remarking in what tree that hole happens to be, flying away and looking round for materials to make its nest, placing those materials in a certain form, leaving its mate to watch, and give notice if an enemy approach, and going through a rational and well connected system, without rationality, and without meaning. It seems to me much less difficult to suppose the bird has a greater capacity than I am habituated to attribute to birds, or that it learns to do these things from seeing others of the same species with which it lives in society do the like. Pray Sir, do me the justice to believe, that I mean to give all this as mere opinion, and that I am superior to dogmatizing. The fact you mention of the squirrel, may, as you say, Sir, if I am not mistaken, afford deductions for either side

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of the question. The first thing I should wish to inquire into would be, whether the squirrel had never been in company with other squirrels that had the like habits; and, if that were proved against me, I should next inquire, whether a young squirrel that had never been in company with any other squirrel did, the very first time it had nuts given it, go and seek for a corner to hide them, and if even this extraordinary thing were to happen, I should still be much more inclined to attribute it to the fears and cunning of the animal, than to suppose it went and came and knew nothing about the matter; for so, I think, acting from instinct, or without intention, implies. Your Wilbury horses, Sir, are surely on my side of the question, and my very good friends on this occasion, or I am once more egregiously deceived. They not only *choose* to leave the heat and retire

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to the shade, but they moreover select that part of the shade which suits them best, that is, where they are least annoyed by flies. Just so an over-roasted cook-maid retires behind her fire-screen, and if she happens to sit down on an uneasy chair removes to another, and gives the easiest the preference. Men play on the harpsichord and talk, as men walk and talk; i. e. the thing is so familiar, it employs only a part of their attention; but give them music which is too difficult for them, that is, which employs their whole attention, and I from experience will answer for their silence. The respect due to your friendly mode of arguing, has occasioned me to do what I have a great aversion to, write a long letter. But however convinced you may be of the fallacy of my arguments, I hope I shall never give you cause to suspect

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the sincerity and friendship with which I am, and shall ever remain,

Your very respectful,

Humble servant,

T. H.

P.S.—I have sent you the magazine, and a volume of the Harleian manuscript, a very scarce, curious, and dear book, and hope it may afford something that will entertain. I have not got the other book: *Lord Kaimes's Sketches of Man* is the title.

To the Hon. Horace Walpole.

SIR,

THE politeness with which I was received on my accidental visit to Strawberry-hill, in company with Mr. Mercier, and the pleasure I felt not only in viewing so rare a collection of the

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works of art, but in the very kind manner in which they were shewn, will not easily be forgotten. As a small testimony of the truth of this, I then projected, and having received them from the binders, now take the liberty to send you copies of such dramatic works of mine, as have been already played and published, which I beg you to accept, not as a task imposed upon you to read them, nor yet with an expectation of praise, but as an acknowledgement of as much thankfulness as I dare express. I have also inclosed a copy of a manuscript comedy, for which I can give no better reason, than that though every motive of delicacy would make me avoid laying you under the least restraint, yet it may happen that the perusal of it may afford you an hour's amusement, which is the best return I am at present able to make for the attention

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with which you were pleased to treat me, and the invitation you gave me to revisit Strawberry-hill in a more favourable season.

I am, Sir,
Your very respectful,
Humble servant,
T. H.

ANSWER.

To Mr. Holcroft.

Berkley Square, Nov. 28th, 1788.

THE civilities, Sir, which you are pleased to say you received from me at Strawberry-hill, were no more than were due to any gentleman, and certainly did not deserve such acknowledgement as you have made; and I should be ashamed of your thanking me so much, if the agreeable manner

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in which you have greatly overpaid them by the present of your works, did not make me easily swallow my shame, though it will not dispense me from assuring you how much I am obliged to you. I shall read them with pleasure as soon as I am settled in town. Just at present, I live between town and country, and should not have leisure but to read them by snatches. It is for this reason, that if you are not in haste for it, I shall beg leave to keep your manuscript comedy, till I can peruse it with proper attention. If you should want it soon, I will return it, and ask for it again, for it would be unjust to the merit of your works to run through them too rapidly.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged, and

Obedient humble servant,

H. WALPOLE.

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To Mr. Holcroft, sen.

Aug. 31*st*, 1791.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I HAVE received both your kind letters, and hope you will excuse my not having answered you sooner, my delay having been occasioned by the intense application which I am obliged to pay to a work I am now writing. I imagine it will be printed about Christmas, and you shall receive an early copy. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to hear of your good health. I am convinced of the efficacy of sea-bathing, and am glad you are near enough to the sea to enjoy the benefit of it. Remember, my dear father, what I repeated to you, when I had last the happiness of your company. Keep your mind alive; exercise every part of your body, fin-

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gers, joints, and muscles; endeavour to infuse spirit and vigour into them, and depend upon it you will be surprised at the effects which will be produced. We die piece-meal, by falling into habits of apathy and neglect; and by supposing that debility and inactivity are the inevitable consequences of age. The mind becomes weary of action; it loses its desires, and the body sinks into listlessness, palsy, and universal decay. This I am persuaded is the error of a false supposition, that death is inevitable. Not that I would have you understand I myself think I shall not die: but I very sincerely think, when I do die, it will be of ignorance, and of the disease I have just mentioned; accidents excepted.

You inquire, dear Sir, whether I am married again. I cannot say what miracles may happen in the world; but I

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really think I have had marriage enough for one man. The woman whom I could truly esteem is not easily to be found; and, if the discovery were made, it would be strange if she were wholly disengaged. Your grandchildren are all in good health, and inquire after you very affectionately. Mrs. Colles and family are well, she dined with us the Sunday before last. With respect to affairs, I am sorry for your sake, my dear father, that I am not so rich as I could wish. The only remedy is strict economy, and hard labour; both of which conditions I am obliged severely to comply with: but, far from being discontented; to be able to comply with them, to be rid of the false notions that fix felicity in the enjoyment of superfluous trifles, which none of us want, and to have a mind industrious, active, and delighting to produce, these things are to me hap-

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piness, which may be almost called supreme. I shall for some months be exceedingly short of money; but you shall nevertheless hear from me, at the usual time. Pray remember me kindly to Mrs. Holcroft, and assure yourself that I shall always remain

Your dutiful and
Affectionate Son,
T. H.

From Mr. Shield.

Turin, September 22d, 1791.

DEAR HOLCROFT,

* * * * * * * * * * * * * My health, since I left England, one day excepted, has been extremely good; but passing the Alps in the manner I did, was too much for me. I thought it degraded the race of men too much to suffer two of them

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to carry me in a sedan over this immense mountain: in consequence of which we had mules; and after riding about one mile, reflection told me that I was shortening the life of an animal, by obliging it to carry me up and down so many precipices; and as I saw women walk it, I was resolved to do the same, for I was then in possession of the temper of the animal which I led, and would not yield to the intreaties of my fellow travellers to remount. I was so much exhausted when I arrived at Laneburg, that I threw myself upon the bed: soon after which, dinner was served up in the same room; but my appetite had entirely left me through fatigue: my heart was good, but my strength failed me. However, after waiting for two hours for some very indifferent tea, it revived me a little, and I got into the coach, and was entirely recovered by the time we reach-

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ed Turin. A man needs no common share of that inestimable quality which you so eminently possess (fortitude) to travel through the South of France and Savoy, with only a dozen words of the language. I thought change of scene would prove the best medicine for me, and I seem to have been right in my prognostications, for I find myself in the full possession of my faculties, and am determined to exert myself in my profession. A very accomplished Russian is my chief companion. But the greatest original of our voiture party is a Chinese, of a small stature, but of a capacious memory: he speaks the French, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch, Russian, and Latin languages, so as to astonish the natives and students of the above. His character is so uncommon that, were you to draw him for the English stage, he must reside in London before the audience

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would acknowledge your character to be natural: most people like him, for the only indignity he has yet met with is his being taken for my valet, from his attention to me.

Your's truly,

WM. SHIELD.

P. S. I cannot view the beautiful scenes which at present surround me, without recollecting the strokes of Milton's pencil in his sublime picture of Paradise Lost.

To Mr. Shield.

London, Oct. 11, 1791.

DEAR SHIELD,

YOU cannot easily imagine the pleasure which your letter gave me. The passions, hopes, and alarms of the heart are necessarily excited in behalf of those for whom it has an affection

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by distance, and by its ignorance of the good or ill health, happiness or misfortune of those it loves. I heard of you at Lyons, and for the moment was satisfied. I knew from the numbers who cross the Alps, that there would be little or no danger in traversing the tremendous Mount Cenis; yet I was anxiously desirous to hear you had passed it in safety. I have accompanied you in imagination, and looked down from its summit on the surrounding nations. Fanny supposes that, being placed there, the eye has a survey, as it were, of all Europe, though in reality its powers are too feeble to see distinctly and accurately at a few yards' distance; but fancy delights in these deceptions, nor can the scenery be other than sublime and astonishing. You are at present in what, perhaps, more than any other, may properly be called the country of contradictions.

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The noble works of art, of sculpture, of painting, and the monuments of architecture, which are to be met with in almost every city of Italy, form a surprising contrast to the ignorance, poverty, sloth, and present depravity of its inhabitants. Men who, by the baneful influence of priesthood and bad government, have, from the first of mankind, become almost the lowest. Sunk in ignorance, deprived of energy, destitute of all noble emulation, we ask with amazement, how could a people like this produce works so magnificent; or tower, as they have done, above the rest of mankind? You are sensible, dear Shield, I now speak of them as a nation; there are, no doubt, individuals among them who still possess those powers, and that genius, of which the herd of their fellow citizens is deprived. They only wait a more happy moment, and a return of times more fortunate,

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to become all that they have been, and I hope much more. I need not tell you the infinite pleasure it would give me, could I, at this moment, transport myself to the palace in which you lodge, for such no doubt it is, and accompany you in all your peregrinations: I have a very earnest desire to see Rome, that queen of cities, and take a view of all her treasures, which as I am told, are so immense and multifarious, as presently to satiate the most inquisitive mind.

Do not forget, dear Shield, to fix your attention on the various works of Michael Angelo: in painting, sculpture, and architecture, I am persuaded he was the first of modern artists. Nor must Raphael escape your notice. Rome, I am told, is the only place on earth to view his pictures, for all the best of them are there. I shall ask you a thousand questions concerning

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them on your return, and of the effect they produced upon you. The remains of ancient architecture: the Pantheon, Trajan's Pillar, the Tower of St. Angelo, &c. &c. you will certainly not forget. I should indeed prefer fixing my attention on a select few of the grandest objects, to that of dividing it into too many parts, and thus rendering it without efficacy. No passage in your letter gave me so much pleasure as that in which you tell me you are in full possession of your faculties, *which you are determined to exert.*—The determination is well worthy of a mind like your's, Shield, which to possess, and not to employ, is, in my opinion, the true sin against the Holy Ghost; it is unpardonable. Familiarized as your mind at present is to harmony, and stored with musical ideas, what can be so desirable for the world, or so delightful to yourself, as to arrange

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those stores, to pour them forth, and to dig the gold from the mountain where, while it lies buried, it is worthless. Not that any accusation of the kind can be brought against you, yet, Shield, distance will authorise friendship in speaking a truth which false modesty unjustly forbids us to repeat *vivâ voce*. Your works are already an honour to your nation and your art; and had you not been under the malignant influence of absurd prejudices, they would have been infinitely more honourable. We are at present all, more or less, under similar influences, and obliged to obey the dictates of necessity. I hope, however, that you will be less so in future than heretofore; and the end of my present very severe labours is to free myself from them if possible. There needed not any caution relative to the newspapers; I believe you are too generally beloved to be in

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danger of attack; but should illiberality or envy shew their fangs, be certain, you will not want a defender. Forgive me, dear Shield, for not transcribing this letter myself; my brain is exceedingly busy, and not a little fatigued; you will see on what, when you return to England. I am obliged to employ every moment in that severe labour which is requisite to form a consistent, efficacious, and excellent whole; whether the work I am writing will be such must be left to the proof, but such at least I must endeavour to make it, and I hope my efforts will not be unsuccessful. All good, all happiness, all pleasure, be with you wherever you go.

T. H.

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To Mr. Godwin.

July 20th, 1797.

IT was my intention to write, for I feel a kind of vacuity of heart, when I am deprived of the intercourse of my accustomed friends; but as I cannot write to them all, and as we have many friends in common, I think there are few whom you may not safely assure on my part, that they have their turn in my thoughts. I deferred this pleasant duty, however, till I had seen your mother, whom I thought it right and respectful to visit. My coming occasioned some little alarm; the Major, Mrs. Harwood, and Fanny, accompanied me; we were seen from the windows as we came up to the gate. I had my spectacles on, and your sister-in-law ran to inform your mother that yourself and Mrs. Godwin were arrived.

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The old lady stood in the portico; the young ones advanced; there was an anxious curiosity in their countenances, and your sister said, addressing herself to me, "I think I know you, Sir." I scarcely knew what to reply: imagination had winged her and myself up to London, where I supposed, some years ago, I might have seen her at your lodgings; taking it for granted she was a relation: but as I did not answer, Major Harwood relieved our embarrassment by announcing my name. The change of countenance, perhaps, could not have fully persuaded her that my face was actually yours, yet she seemed rather to trust to her hopes, than to her recollection; and these being disappointed, an immediate blank took possession of her features, and the rising joy was damped. Your mother, however, very kindly invited us in, and gave us all the good things she had, that

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could administer to our immediate pleasures. The expectation which Major Harwood had raised by his description of your mother were not entirely answered. She was neither so alert, so commanding, nor so animated, as he and Ann had described. I think her very rapidly on the decline: having quitted her farming business I have no doubt myself but that her faculties will be impaired much faster than they would have been had she continued to exert them. Her memory is good, her conceptions, speaking comparatively, are clear, and her strength considerable. I have seen more of the county of Norfolk, than of its inhabitants; of which county I remark, that, to the best of my recollection, it contains more churches, more flints, more turkeys, more turnips, more wheat, more cultivation, more commons, more cross-roads, and from that token probably

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more inhabitants, than any county I ever visited. It has another distinguishing and paradoxical feature, if what I hear be true: it is said to be more illiterate than any other parts of England, and yet I doubt if any county of like extent have produced an equal number of famous men. This is, however, merely a conjecture made, not from examination, but from memory. As it is necessary for me to bathe, I shall immediately depart for Yarmouth, and pass through Norwich, which I have not yet seen. If you, or Mrs. Godwin, or both, can but prevail on yourself or selves to endure the fatigue of writing to me, I hope I need not use many words to convince you of the pleasure it will give me: and be it understood that this letter is addressed to you both, whatever the direction on the back may affirm to the contrary. Professions are almost impertinent, and yet I am al-

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most tempted to profess to you how sincerely and seriously I am interested in your happiness, but as I am sure my words would ill describe my thoughts, I shall forbear. Pray inform me, sweet lady, in what state is your novel? And on what, courteous Sir, are *you* employed? Though I am idle myself, I cannot endure that any body else should be so. Direct to me at the Post-Office, Yarmouth.

To Mr. Holcroft.

December 11*th*, 1794.

SIR,

WERE I not writing to Mr. Holcroft, I should think it needful to apologize for my abrupt self-introduction to you in London, and the liberty I now take in addressing you: but I trust you will not deem me impertinent, nor expect any professions to

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convince you of the esteem and admiration I have for your character. These sentiments induced me to visit you in your late unjust confinement, to be anxious for your safety, and sincerely to rejoice that you are now restored to your friends, and your extensive circle of usefulness. You may perhaps recollect the scheme* of which I gave you an imperfect outline; I much desired your opinion and advice on the subject; but your mind being then much engaged on its peculiar situation, I forbore to intrude the subject. Hoping you may now be happily settled at your rightful home, and believing you would be happy to assist me by advice, as well as enforce by precept any virtuous intention, I would engage your thoughts to our projected plan of establishing a genuine system of property. America pre-

* The Pantisocrasy Scheme.

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sents many advantages to the accomplishment of this scheme—the easy rate at which land may be purchased, is not the least important: yet we are not determined on emigration. Principle, not plan, is our object. A friend has suggested that the plan is practicable in some of the uncultivated parts of Wales. I recollect your expressing a desire that we might form such a society without leaving the kingdom. As we wish to consult all who may render our efforts more serviceable to the cause of truth and virtue, we should be happy if in some unemployed hour, you would consider the subject, and impart to us any objection which may occur peculiar to the scheme of emigration. From the writings of William Godwin and yourself, our minds have been illuminated, we wish our actions to be guided by the same superior abilities; perhaps when together, you may bestow some

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thoughts to our advantage. To him, and your friend Nicholson, I would request the remembrance of an admirer. Long may they continue to instruct and amend mankind! If we could practise our scheme in this kingdom, it would save much expense, perhaps danger, and at the same time be more agreeable to our private inclinations; but the probability of being obnoxious to Government, and subject to tythes, are in our opinions serious objections. I forbear to make any remark on the late trials, or formally to congratulate you on your acquittal. I hope the spirit of enquiry will be excited to advantage; perhaps you would rather have had your trial proceeded in; though the Court authority prevented your *speaking*, they cannot prevent you from *printing* your injured case. I am anxious to see your appeal on the subject.

When you address your charming

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daughter, (Mrs. C——, of Exeter), whom I saw with you, be good enough to make my remembrance. I wonder not at your drawing the charming character of Anna St. Ives, having so fair an original.

ROBERT LOVELL.

No. 14, *Old Market, Bristol,* 1794.

From Mr. Dermody.

SIR, *London, June 15th,* 1796.

FROM the universal celebrity of your talents, and the liberal spirit which breathes through all your productions, I am, though a stranger, emboldened to request your superior guidance in the paths of literature. Very little used to authorship as a trade, inexperienced in the polity of booksellers, and even unacquainted with the city itself, it would, I presume, be no dishonourable employment to direct a wandering muse, and you alone, Sir,

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are the person I conceive (from general benevolence) best adapted to that task both by affability and experience. Without these two qualifications, you could not have written Alwyn, which, next to Fielding's work, contains the most affecting and sportive scenes that ever adorned that (of which you have given so fine a definition) a novel. I have lately borne a commission in the army, and am, at present, under the patronage of a most learned and amiable nobleman; however, being formerly taught to believe that I had some talents, it is disagreeable to be unemployed with every faculty on the stretch for exertion. By that nobleman's desire, I left a large poem, "The Retrospect," with a printer of eminence in Pall Mall; but was much surprised to be informed yesterday that he had embarked for Italy, and the manuscript was locked up. I have but a very rough draught of it now till he returns. Your very

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great dramatic eminence might be of the most material benefit by pointing out the steps proper to be taken in a line of which I have been ever enamoured. If you deign to direct a short reply to this strange intrusion, I shall have the honour to lay a few pieces of poetry (which fortunately are correctly copied) before your judgment—meanwhile

I am, Sir, with great respect,
Your obedient Servant,
THOMAS DERMODY.

No. 30, Oxendon-Street, Haymarket.

From the Marquis Dampierre.

Liege, 6 Xbre l'an 1r de la République.

DEAR HOLCROFT,

I CHARGE my dear friend, the young Mergées, my countermen, to tell you, that I never forgot our old friendship, he'll tell you my profession of faith, upon the Revolution. He'll bring you a relation of the victories of the French, and you'll see my part in

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it. I have the honour to conduct the liberty lads in the way of the victory.

Adieu, dearer among the dear,

H. DAMPIERRE.*

Maj. G. of the French Republic.

From Madame de Genlis.†

SIR, WITH pleasure, as well as gratitude, I acknowledge the receipt of the translation you were pleased to send me, which came to hand prior to your letter, and consequently before I could well go to make my claim. I have not yet had time to peruse it, but by the preface I am surprised to find you have omitted some incidents in the tales of *Eglantine* and of *Pamela*, which in this country have

* The Marquis de Dampierre, with whom I was very intimate at Paris in 1783. He received a mortal wound on the 8th of May, 1793, of which he died on the 10th, when he was Commander in Chief, and which battle the French gained. T.H.

† This letter is a translation from the French.

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created universal interest. Even the journalists, from whom I had little reason to expect mercy, owing to the severity with which they are treated in my works, have with one accord praised the expunged passages. I mention this to you with the less reserve, because those very passages are not of my own invention, which may be seen by referring to the notes relative to them. I have besides given the place of Mad^me^ Busca's residence; a number of persons have been to see her, and have satisfied themselves of the truth of my statement. Woe be to the false delicacy which is unable to endure a recital honourable to humanity, when made with an appeal to the feelings powerful enough to command tears! However, Sir, be persuaded that I entertain a lively sense of the very great attention you have otherwise shewn me, as well as of the handsome, and by far too flattering encomiums

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you have passed on my feeble productions. My motives are pure, and I have courage enough to tell truths likely to prove beneficial:—my writings will corrupt no one;—this is the only merit I am anxious to claim for myself; and indeed in our days it is sufficiently rare to satisfy its possessor.

There is now in the press a new edition of the *Théatre d'Education*, to which I have added another volume, consisting of pieces taken from the Scriptures. This new edition will appear in the course of May next, and I beg your permission, Sir, to forward you a copy, as a small token of my gratitude, and of the sentiments with which I have the honour to be, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant, DUCREST GENLIS.

Belle Chassée, 22d Feb. 1785.

FINIS.

J. M'Creery, Printer,
Black-Horse Court, Fleet-Street.

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